

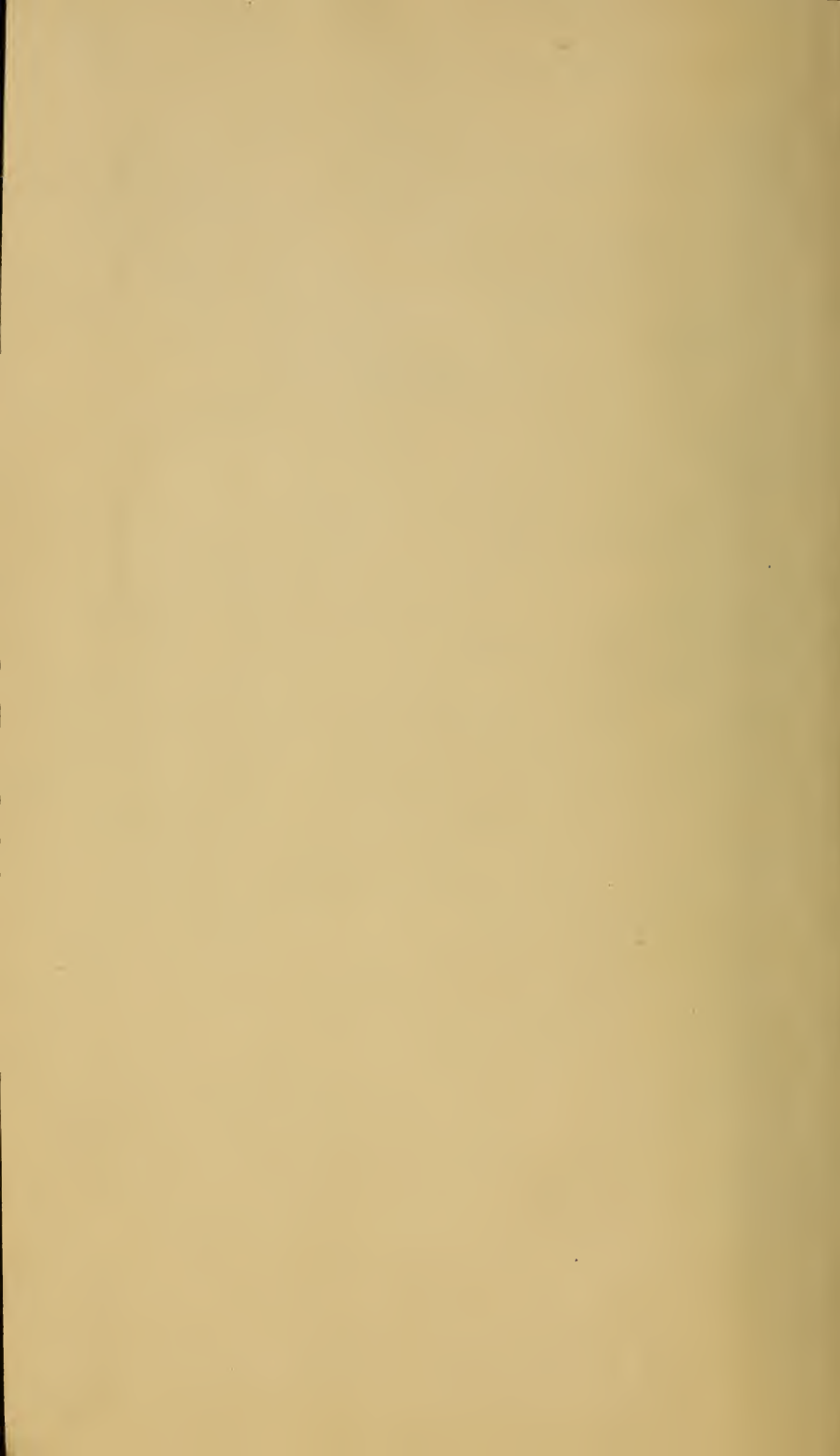
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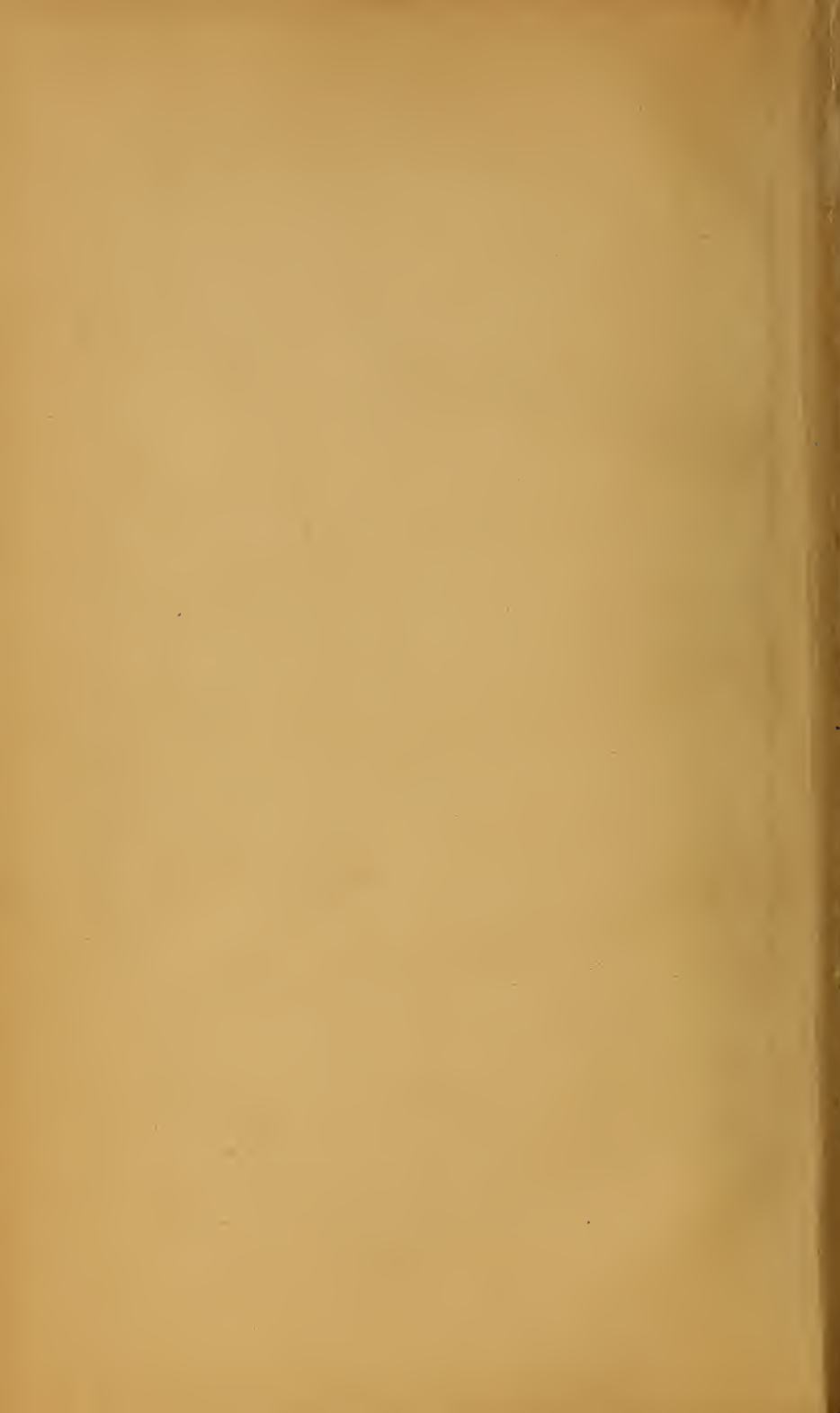


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MEMOIR
OF
CAPTAIN
EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON,
R.N., C.B.

WITH SKETCHES OF HIS
PROFESSIONAL LIFE,
AND
EXERTIONS IN THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY,
AS CONNECTED WITH
THE "CHILDREN'S FRIEND SOCIETY," &c.
OBSERVATIONS UPON HIS "NAVAL HISTORY,"
AND
"LIFE OF THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT."

BY HIS BROTHER,
VICE-ADMIRAL SIR JAHLEEL BRENTON,
BART., K.C.B.

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TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
SIR GEORGE COCKBURN,
ADMIRAL OF THE RED.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

You knew my late and lamented brother early in life. He had the honour of bearing your broad pendant in the first line-of-battle ship he commanded, and had the happiness of enjoying your friendship to the last. It naturally occurred to me to dedicate this memorial of him to you. Your kind acceptance of it is the strongest confirmation of his value both in public and in private life.

It is with the greatest satisfaction I avail myself of this permission, and beg you will receive this little work as a testimony of the respect and esteem with which

I am,

My dear Sir George,

Your faithful and obliged Servant,

JAHLEEL BRENTON.

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PREFACE.

IN venturing to lay before the public an account of the life of a near and valued relative, I feel that it is incumbent upon me to offer my reasons for doing so, particularly as it was not his lot to attain either to high rank or distinction in his profession; but as my lamented brother has been known to his country, not only as an officer in the Royal Navy, but as an author, and more especially—as I trust I may say, without incurring the charge of presumption,—as a philanthropist, (in which two last characters he has met with no small share of that censure from which

those who have occupied any place in the public attention have seldom been exempt,) I feel it necessary to offer such explanations of his character and conduct, and such vindications of his motives and feelings, as my intimate knowledge of them enable me to do: and which may, and I hope will, have the effect of correcting the misrepresentations which have hitherto prevailed on subjects connected with my brother's life, and of placing him in that point of view before the public in which it was always his earnest wish and endeavour to stand.

With respect to his professional career, I have little to say: his opportunities of distinguishing himself were but few; but of these he zealously availed himself; and his reputation is well known to his brother officers, amongst whom he served. I have long hesitated as to the propriety of offering any observations of my own upon the subject of his life, nor do I think I should ever have been induced to do so,

but for the opposition the Children's Friend Society, of which he was the founder, has met with, and which has had so powerful an effect as to compel the benevolent and indefatigable managers to dissolve the institution. My great object in presenting this work to the public is to shew that the plan on which he acted was founded on the purest principles of true Christian charity, and free from any selfish or vain-glorious motive, and that the charges made against the Society were totally groundless. This is already generally felt and acknowledged; and however unsuccessful his first efforts may have been in endeavouring to rescue the youthful poor from the state of degradation, misery, and crime in which such multitudes are involved, I have little doubt that they will be ultimately blessed far beyond his most sanguine expectations.

JAHLEEL BRENTON.

*Casterton,
10th August, 1841.*

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MEMOIRS
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It is due to the memory of this lamented individual, that some notice should be taken of a life, so many years of which had been devoted (almost exclusively, it may be said) to the interests of his fellow-creatures; indeed, it is but too probable that its termination was accelerated by his exertions in their behalf. And these observations are rendered peculiarly necessary, in consequence of the repeated attacks which have been made recently in the public prints against the Children's Friend Society, of which he is considered the founder.

We shall be very brief in our account of the life of the subject of these memoirs, and only offer such observations as will tend to shew his early devotion to the profession he had chosen, and which he imbibed from his father.

CAPTAIN EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON was the second son of the late Rear-Admiral Jahleel Brenton. He was born at Rhode Island, in North America, on the 20th July, 1774. The sea became his element, and the naval profession occupied a very prominent place in his affections. Its success was the object of his most earnest solicitude through life; even the labours of his latter days had a continual reference to the welfare of the seafaring part of our population, and to the means of promoting the increased comfort of our seamen.

He commenced his naval career, it may be said, almost in infancy, having embarked in the *Queen*, armed ship, then commanded by his father, in May, 1781, before he was seven years of age, and continued in that ship and the *Termagant* till near the conclusion of the war, when he was sent to a school, at Ware, in Hertfordshire. Here he continued two years, and then joined his father's family in France, at St. Omer. He

soon acquired a competent knowledge of the French language, which he found of essential service to him throughout his professional life.

On the 13th Nov. 1788, he joined the *Crown*, 64, Captain James Cornwallis, at Chatham, fitting out for the broad pendant of Commodore Cornwallis, who was appointed commander-in-chief in the East Indies. The lieutenants, Isaac Schomberg, Lawrence William Halstead, Charles Cunningham, Edward Oliver Osborne, Edward James Foote, and Lord Henry Paulet, and afterwards John Giffard. As all these officers rose to high rank and eminent distinction in the wars which followed, and we find a pleasure, as well as a benefit, in tracing the career of such men, we have ventured to record their names, as given in a memorandum found among Captain Brenton's papers; and from the same source we extract the subjoined amusing account of his first joining his ship.

"Every thing that Smollet says about the miseries of a man-of-war I found exactly and correctly true in 1788. I was put to mess in the starboard wing. All my messmates, except the *caterer*, were very kind to me. He was very irritable, but otherwise much esteemed. We

never hit it off well. He wanted me to do the work of mess-servant, to which I stoutly objected. One morning he gave me a sound box on the ear, because I put the pewter tea spoons on the left side of the breakfast cups instead of the right. This set me off; and the next act of despotism induced me to quit the mess at once. But I had not then read the wise and sound advice of Lord Bacon, "Never to give up any thing in a pet." None of the other youngsters had yet joined. I had no mess to go to, so I went and lived on my chest in the gun-room, feeding upon plum cake that my dear mother had given me, and buttoning up my surtout to keep me warm; but I got very bilious with my new diet, and a drink of small beer when thirsty. At last I became very ill, and went to the doctor's mate, as he was called in those days—the moderns would call him the surgeon's assistant. He was the very personification of Smollet's Morgan. I told him my case, and was at once put under the care of the Loblolly Boy.* The neglect with which I was treated had almost made me resolve to give up the service. Chilblains came on to an alarming

* The Surgeon's drudge—whose duty it was to collect the patients, and administer to each his dose.

extent, and I was so perfectly useless in the ship, and burthensome to myself, that I determined to return home if it were possible. The consummation of this was more speedily accomplished than I was aware of, or than I wished for myself. We sailed from the Great Nore on the 22nd of Dec. 1788, for Portsmouth; and in running down the Swin Channel, concluded we were in safety, when, with a fair wind and topmast steering-sail set, our pilot ran us upon the Kentish Knock, and a pretty knock we got. Off went our rudder, down came the tiller upon my hammock in the gun-room, in which I lay as sick as any new-raised recruit could be. But sea-sickness and fear never sleep together in the same hammock, so out I turned; but it was a dismal time for me with my chilblains. I put my head up the ladder; it was dark and snowing—six o'clock in the evening—minute guns firing—all noise and confusion—wet, slippery, and piercing cold. I found I could be of no use, so I very quietly *turned in* again. Providentially the ship drifted off the shoal, and we came to an anchor, continuing to fire our minute guns, and rockets, and to keep our signal lights up; nor was it long before some Broadstairs boats came to our assistance. The

charge of the ship was taken out of the pilot's hands, and he was placed under arrest. The boatmen soon shewed us where we were, and we got under way. I remember as well as if it was yesterday, we had two boats on each quarter, and they steered us perfectly well through the Gull stream into the Downs, where we made a Pakenham rudder.* When we got to Spithead, the pilot was tried by a court-martial, and sentenced to two years imprisonment in the Marshalsea, and mulct of his pay.

“It was the fashion to say our ship would certainly be lost, because she met with so many accidents before she sailed—first she got on shore—then she broke adrift in Portsmouth harbour—then she caught fire. The prophecies however all failed. We sailed for India, and were out three years. I was in her all the time, and never was so happy in my life, although the rats used to run about as tame as rabbits. We used to catch them with fish hooks, stab them with forks or cutlasses, and dress and eat them.”

The above extracts will, we trust, be excused, as they give so graphic an account of the sufferings to which young people were exposed on first

* So called after the inventor, the late Captain Edward Pakenham.

entering the navy, and at the same time shew the elasticity of the youthful mind under the endurance of them. The service is much ameliorated since that period, and far less inconveniences are experienced, we may say, by all classes.

Captain Brenton evinced, from a very early period, a peculiarly active and enquiring state of mind—great quickness, and a remarkable degree of cheerfulness. His memory was very retentive; and the observations he made, even in youth, were surprisingly acute and original. Whatever he undertook was carried on with a degree of energy which shewed that his heart was in the work; and all who were associated with him, as officers or as subordinates, will recognise these features in his character.

It was a constant habit with him to treasure up, under the various trials to which he was exposed, such reflections as arose out of them, and which might be of use to the inexperienced. Amongst his papers we find the following advice, which will be of the utmost importance, if attended to by young persons in their first outset in life, who are irritable and impatient:

“There is nothing a young person on board a ship, should more carefully avoid than being

quarrelsome or touchy. Offence taken at trifles often leads to very serious consequences—angry words arise, and the best friends are often made enemies for life. Those who are apt to take offence, should be also careful not to commit a fault which young people of all ranks in life, and particularly on board ship, are very apt to fall into. Among the sailors, or foremast men, the affair generally leads to a boxing match; when one or both parties are sure to get a sound beating, and probably brought to the gangway and flogged for it the next day. Among the young officers, serious catastrophes often arise.”

Amongst the many friends he met with in his youth, I believe he derived very important advantages from his friend, Admiral Giffard, who was one of the lieutenants of the Crown, when he was a midshipman in that ship. To his friendly advice, and to the use of his books and his cabin, much of the steadiness of his character and his habits of reading may be attributed. Officers are not often aware of the influence they obtain over the young people who are thus placed near them, by such kind attentions, and how much the youthful mind may be elevated above the thoughtless and childish habits in

which they are prone to indulge, if left to themselves: were they sensible of this, there is no doubt but the effort would be more frequently made. The judicious officer has much in his power in this way, even as a lieutenant; but as regards the captain, such attention to those placed under his care becomes a sacred duty, for the performance of which he possesses every requisite; and by a mild exercise of the authority with which he is vested, can almost ensure success. There are many brilliant and distinguished officers who may ascribe all the respect and eminence to which they have attained, under Providence, to the kind care and example of the officers with whom they began their career: this we believe to have been peculiarly the case in the present instance, and is confirmed by the kindness and affection which subsisted between the subject of these memoirs and his kind friend.

The following extract from Captain Brenton's early memoranda, if not of much present interest, will, at all events, shew his youthful habits of observation, which retained their influence to the end of his life—as such it legitimately belongs to his biography:

“The inhabitants of the Andaman Islands were few in number, but their hostility was at first troublesome; they were very expert with the bow and arrow—transfixing, as they wandered along the shore, the small fish with great certainty, and the wild hog seldom escaped from the dexterity of his pursuers. At north-east harbour our boats rowed along the thick jungle, which, projecting some feet from the land, grew over and touched the water, forming an impenetrable thicket, from whence the savage shot his arrow in security with almost unerring aim. The boats returned with four men wounded, and disappointed in the object of their search to find fresh water. The commodore, with a strong party of officers and marines, landed on a small island, to which three canoes had been seen to go early on the same morning. On this spot the trees were, as on the main land, so thick that our men could not penetrate; and as they walked round the sandy beach, in search of an entrance, eleven of them received severe wounds from the arrows of the savages concealed in the woods. Some hours elapsed before they were discovered: at length, when seen on the tops of the trees, the enraged marines quickly despatched

seven of them, and three were taken with their canoes. Never was a man found in a more perfect state of nature: they were all males, without a vestige of clothing; their woolly heads smeared with a red ochre; their bodies tattooed; their stature under the middling size, or about four feet seven inches. They exhibited the utmost degree of terror, when brought on board, with their hands tied behind their backs, and attempted to bite all who came near them; but were pacified by kindness, and soon became so familiar as to dance, in their stile, to the drum and fife. We had strong suspicion of their being cannibals; some of the governor's people at Port Cornwallis having been found murdered, and slices cut out of them, as if intended for food. They appeared apprehensive they were to meet a similar fate, and, at night, one of them jumped overboard, and escaped; the other two, on the following day, were landed, and we saw them no more."

Soon after his return from India, in 1792, Mr. Brenton passed his examination for a lieutenant, and was placed by Sir Philip Affleck, (a friend of his father's,) on board the *Bellona*, 74, commanded by Captain George Wilson. In

August, 1794, he was transferred to the *Queen Charlotte*, bearing the flag of Earl Howe, from whence he was promoted, the following year, to the rank of lieutenant, and appointed to the *Venus* frigate, under the command of his old friend and shipmate, Captain (afterwards Admiral) Sir Laurence William Halstead, and shortly afterwards, with him, into the *Phoenix*, a frigate of a larger class, in which he assisted at the capture of the Dutch frigate, *Argo*.

From the *Phoenix*, Mr. Brenton was appointed to the *Agamemnon*, and, subsequently, became first-lieutenant of the *Raven*, a fine brig sloop of 18 guns, in which vessel he was wrecked, at the mouth of the river Elbe, on the 4th of February, 1798. The situation of the crew was most awful for some hours, the sea making a continued breach over them; but the whole were at length rescued by the good conduct of some blanquenesse boats, which came to their assistance. Upon the court-martial taking place upon the loss of the *Raven*, at which the captain, officers, and crew were fully acquitted, Captain Bligh, who was one of the members, made Mr. Brenton the offer to serve with him in the *Agincourt*, 64, bearing the flag of Vice-Admiral Lord Radstock, going

out as commander-in-chief in the Newfoundland station. This he readily accepted, and at length became first-lieutenant of that ship, in 1801. He followed Captain Bligh into the *Theseus* in the same capacity, and at the conclusion of the peace in that year went with him to the West Indies, where he soon after was promoted unto the command of the *Lark* sloop of war, by Earl St. Vincent, at that time First Lord of the Admiralty.

At the peace of Amiens, he returned to England, when the *Lark* was paid off. He soon after married Miss Margaret Diana Cox, the daughter of the late General Cox, Equerry to His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester: she is living to deplore her severe loss, after the experience of thirty-seven years of real domestic felicity, uninterrupted but by those periods of separation which his profession rendered unavoidable.

At the renewal of hostilities in May, 1803, Captain Brenton was appointed to command the *Merlin* armed ship, an old collier, having 16 guns between decks. In this vessel he was frequently engaged with the enemy's flotilla and the batteries on the coast in the neighbourhood of Havre.

In Dec. 1803, having observed H. M. S. Shannon on shore under the batteries of Tatihou Island, near Cape Barfleur, and in possession of the enemy, he resolved to attempt her destruction. From the position of the Shannon, it was evident that she had ran aground by keeping too close to the weather shore in a gale of wind, owing to the strength of the tides. She was apparently but little damaged, and the French having sent the officers and crew into the interior as prisoners, were laying out anchors for the purpose of getting the ship off. Captain Brenton sent his boats at night under the command of his two lieutenants, John Sheridan and Henry C. Thompson, who gallantly boarded and burned her, notwithstanding a heavy fire from the batteries, and returned to their ship without a man killed or wounded. At daylight not a vestige of the Shannon appeared above water. In his naval history it will be remarked that Captain Brenton neither mentions his own name or even that of his ship in the narrative of this affair, but does justice to his gallant young officers by recording their names.

Captain Brenton was subsequently employed with the squadron under Captain Oliver, on the

French coast, and assisted at the bombardment of Havre, in July and August, 1804.

In Jan. 1805, he was appointed to the *Amaranthe*, a fine new brig, mounting 18 guns, with 120 men, and was for some time employed in the north seas, where his activity was rewarded by several captures.

In 1808, he was sent to the West Indies, and was very actively employed on the Leeward Island station. On the 13th of Dec., he so gallantly distinguished himself, that in consequence of the official account of his conduct given by Captain Collier, the senior officer of the squadron, and transmitted to the Admiralty, their Lordships were pleased to promote him to the rank of Captain, and as a further mark of their approbation, to order his commission to be dated on the day of the action. The following is an extract from Captain Collier's letter. After detailing an unsuccessful attack made by the boats of the little squadron on the preceding day upon a French brig of war and two schooners under the protection of the batteries, he says, "In the evening, I was joined by the *Amaranthe*, who watched the brig during the night. At 8, A. M., we perceived she had weighed. Captain Bren-

ton, in the most handsome manner, volunteered to bring her out. (She was then towing and sweeping close in shore towards St. Pierre's.) The boats from the *Circe* and *Stork*, and men from the *Express* were sent to tow the *Amaranthe* up, who was at this time sweeping and using every exertion to close with the enemy. At 10, the French brig grounded near several batteries, to the northward of St. Pierre's. The *Amaranthe* tacked, and worked in, under a heavy fire from the batteries and brig, from which she suffered considerably, having one killed and five wounded, followed by the *Circe*, the rest of the squadron engaging to leeward. The *Amaranthe*'s well-directed fire soon obliged them to quit the brig. Lieutenant Hay, of that Sloop, on this service distinguished himself very much, and speaks of the gallantry of Messrs. Brooke and Rigmaiden, of the same vessel, in very handsome terms, who with the boats of the *Circe*, *Amaranthe*, and *Stork*, boarded her under a heavy fire from the batteries and troops on shore. Lieutenant Hay, finding her bilged, and that it was impossible to get her off, effectually destroyed her in the evening. Captain Brenton again volunteered to destroy the schooner, then on shore. I ordered

Lieutenant George Robinson, second of the *Amaranthe*, but acting first of the *Circe*, on this occasion to follow the directions of Captain Brenton. At nine o'clock, I had the pleasure to see the schooner on fire, and burnt to the water's edge. I am sorry to add, that, on this service, Mr. Jones, master of the *Amaranthe*, was wounded, and one seaman killed, and three wounded belonging to the *Express*.

"The captains, officers, and men of the squadron you did me the honour to place under my command, behaved with that coolness and intrepidity inherent in British seamen, *particularly the Amaranthe, whose gallant conduct was noticed by the whole squadron*. From the troops of the Royal York Rangers, doing duty as marines, I received every assistance. Lieutenant Crooke, who commanded the boats, I am sorry to say, is severely wounded in four places. The loss of this gallant young man's services is severely felt on board the *Circe*. I am likewise sorry to add that Mr. Colman is among the number dangerously wounded. His conduct on this, and on other occasions deserves my warmest approbation.

"The brig destroyed was *La Cigne*, of 18 guns,

and 140 men, with flour, guns, &c., for the relief of Martinique. The two schooners had likewise flour, and men armed. I have not yet learnt their force or names. I am happy to say the one left off the Pearl, is ashore, bilged.*

(Signed)

“F. COLLIER.”

Whilst in the *Amaranthe*, Captain Brenton was sent with a flag of truce into Martinique, where he made his first acquaintance with Admiral Vilaret, the Governor. The account of this visit will not be uninteresting.

“When in command of the *Amaranthe*, I served in the squadron under Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, blockading the Island of Martinique, I was stationed with Commodore, now Admiral The Right Honourable Sir George Cockburn, in Fort Royal Bay. One of the squadron captured a French vessel, which, coming from Marseilles, attempted to get into one of the ports of the Island. On board of her, there happened to be a large bag of letters for the settlers on the Island, and the commodore considered that it would be but an act of common humanity to forward

* Gazette Letter.

them to their destination. I was therefore ordered to hoist a flag of truce. I thought it a delightful break in the monotony of cruising, and lost no time in executing the orders I had received to deliver the letters. The weather was very fine, the water smooth, and as my brig sailed admirably, I soon got under the guns of fort Republican, which stands on a point of land forming the caronage, or harbour, and defends the town of Port Royal. I wonder now they had not sunk me, which they could easily have done, for the French at that time were not much in the habit of respecting flags of truce. However, I hove too close under their guns, and taking the bag of letters in my boat, I landed at the town; but before I had stepped out of the boat, I was accosted by a French officer, who was standing with many others on the beach: 'Sir,' said he, 'you have violated the flag of truce by coming under our fort with your guns and powder in.' I replied that I had merely obeyed the orders I had received from my superior officer, and that my apology was the bag of letters which I had the honour to offer him, they having been found on board our prize, and that the seals were unbroken. On hearing this, they seemed to be very much

delighted, and M. Vilaret, the Governor, the officer who commanded the French fleet in the battle of the 1st June, 1794, said, ‘Sir, I accept your flag of truce with many thanks. I hope you will do me the favour to dine with me.’ I replied I could not have that honour, being a cruiser, bound to examine every strange vessel that might come in sight. He answered, that he would give me his word of honour that there were no strangers in sight, as he must know from the signal-posts on the mountains. I then consented, and he kindly said, ‘Then, captain, you are my prisoner till sun-set,’ and we walked away together to the government house.

“In the meantime the Governor, unknown to me, filled my boat with all the good things of the island, and desired my coxswain to return for me at the appointed time. The dinner was served at two o’clock, and was of the most sumptuous kind, and all the most distinguished men on the island were invited. In short, I was made very much of, as they said it was an act of such kind consideration in my commander to send them their letters. The good old admiral filled me a bumper of delicious claret, and drank to our next meeting,

which he hoped would be as friendly as the present one. The captain of a noble French frigate which was lying in the caronage, also drank to me, and said, that 'when we next met; there would be many hats to spare.' He alluded to the attack which he knew we were about to make on the island. Poor fellow, his was one of them. He was killed by one of our shells, but not before his frigate was set on fire and burnt. The dinner, however, was ended as it begun, with the utmost cordiality, and the party having escorted me to the boat, I took leave of my friendly and kind enemies. We shortly after attacked the island, and took it after much bloodshed, and the admiral and his staff came home prisoners in the ship I commanded.

"Thus I formed a valuable acquaintance with a gallant officer, who was at that time the enemy of my country. He frequently came and sat in my little cabin on the quarter deck, and talked over the battle of the 1st of June. He always expressed the greatest esteem for the British character."

Captain Brenton was appointed in March, 1809, to command the *Belleisle*, of 74 guns.

In this his first post ship, he had the honour

and advantage of bearing the broad pendant of his steady friend Commodore Cockburn, now Admiral Sir George Cockburn; and he always looked to this part of his professional life with peculiar satisfaction, as it procured him the unabated regard of this distinguished officer and benevolent man, not only whilst they sailed together, but to the last day of his life, when they were associated in getting up an Institution for the benefit of shipwrecked mariners and fishermen, and which, by the great exertions of the gallant admiral has now obtained such a degree of prosperity and stability, as bids fair to give it a place amongst the first and best of those institutions which do so much honour to this country.

The Commodore had been previously appointed to act as brigadier-general at the siege of Martinique, and Captain Brenton to command a detachment of seamen employed in the batteries on shore. I shall give a very short account of this event, extracted from his naval history.

As Pigeon Island commands the anchorage on Fort Royal Bay, it was resolved to begin by attempting to get possession of it. They had many and great difficulties to contend with.

“The obstructions to our landing were numerous. The ruggedness of the rocks, and the fire of the enemy’s battery on Pigeon Island on our boats as they opened the point of land between the fleet and that fort, gave us considerable annoyance. Two of the *Pompée’s* men were killed by the bursting of a shell. A road was cut through a very thick wood on the top of *Morne Vanier*, which overhung Pigeon Island. A nine-inch hawser was next carried up, and secured to stumps of trees; and from the hawser tackles were attached to the guns. The sailors delighting in such work, ran down the hill with the tackle falls, as the guns flew up with almost incredible velocity, notwithstanding the depth of the mud, the incessant rain, and the steep acclivity of the new cut road.

“There is something indescribably animating to the mind of the British seamen, whenever they are ordered to land with a great gun. The novelty of getting on shore, and the hopes of coming into action, give a degree of buoyancy to their spirits, which carries them to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. An hundred sailors attached by their canvas belts to a devil cart, with a long 24-pounder slung to its axletree,

make one of the most amusing and delightful recollections of former days. On this occasion, when the Governor, the worthy and gallant Vilaret, was told how they were dragging the cannon along, he replied, 'It is all over with us!'"

A general attack took place on the 19th Feb. and after a tremendous bombardment of five days, Vilaret capitulated, on condition that the garrison should be sent to France in British ships, and there exchanged for British subjects.

After the reduction of that valuable colony, the French garrison was embarked on board the *Belleisle*, *Ulysses*, and seven transports; Commodore Cockburn having the captain-general and all his staff on board the *Belleisle*, proceeded to Europe, agreeable to the terms of the capitulation.

The French government endeavoured to obtain the garrison of Martinique, without complying with the conditions on which only they were to be restored, viz., in exchange for an equal number of British subjects; but we will give the detail in Captain Brenton's own words, who was present upon the occasion:

"On the 23rd April the commodore anchored

in Quiberon Bay, with the *Ulysses* and convoy: Colonel Boyer, chief of the staff taken on the island, was immediately sent with a letter from the captain-general to the Minister of the Marine, and another from Commodore Cockburn to the same personage, stating the circumstances under which they had arrived. The boat which landed Colonel Boyer in the Morbihan, brought a note from him, stating that an officer was waiting there for the arrival of the prisoners, with full powers to *treat* for their exchange. The word "treat" was understood to conceal some chicanery, by which the enemy were to gain possession of these men, without returning ours. The capitulation of Martinique had been received in France previous to our arrival, or how should an officer be waiting for us with 'full powers;' and had there been any honourable intention of fulfilling the treaty, an equal number of British prisoners would have been prepared to embark. Treating had ended at Martinique, before they laid down their arms. We must, therefore, relate one more instance of the falsehood of Napoleon.

"M. Rodan, the commissioner, soon appeared, covered with silver lace and smiles. He ap-

proached, and saluted the commodore; after which he pronounced some flattering eulogiums on the valour and generosity of England, particularly of her navy, and did not fail to claim a large share of these qualities for the great Napoleon and the French nation. So earnest was M. Rodan to begin the work of exchange, that he proposed immediately disembarking the prisoners; but the commodore was in no such hurry. He observed to M. Rodan, that he would proceed up the bay, nearer to the town, for the purpose of more ready communication, and in the meantime the Ulysses should remain off Hédie with the transports. This was, of course, agreed to, under the stipulation also provided by the commodore, that during any delay of the negotiation, the British and the prisoners should be supplied with such refreshments as they might require, after their long voyage and arduous services.

“On the following day, the commissioner again appeared with a joyful countenance: ‘Allons, M. le Commodore, tout est arrangé.’ ‘I am glad to hear of it,’ said the commodore; ‘but where are the 2400 Englishmen in exchange for so many Frenchmen?’ ‘Je les ai dans ma

poche,' replied the flippant commissary. The commodore looked very grave, and returned no answer to this impertinent familiarity, whilst M. Rodan handed from his pocket a list of 3700 Englishmen, whom, he pretended, had been liberated by French cruisers, observing, that the commodore would, no doubt, redeem the honour of his country by taking up these receipts, and then, with unparralleled effrontery, he added, 'When M. le Commadore has put on shore the whole garrison of Martinique, he will still be indebted to the French government 1300 men.' It is very easy to suppose the kind of answer given to this insolent Frenchman, who affected or perhaps felt some real surprize that his proposals were rejected. He entreated, however, that the commodore would wait the return of a courier from Paris. This was granted, and in the mean time a constant and vigilant guard was kept on the motions of the prisoners. At the end of four days, an answer arrived from the Minister of the Marine, repeating the former rejected proposals as a *sine qua non*, and M. Rodan intimated, that unless these terms were acceded to, all further communication with the shore should be interdicted. Turning with in-

dignation from the agent of a government so faithless, the commodore ordered the signal to be made to weigh. It was instantly complied with; and as the squadron moved out of the bay, it was followed by numerous boats, in which were the wives, the parents, the children of many of the unhappy prisoners, in a state of grief which it would be vain to attempt to describe. The poor men, afraid to trust each other, shouted with ill dissembled joy, 'Vive Napoleon!' This was the magnanimous and humane Emperor who consigned his soldiers 'to the confinement of hideous pontoons,'* and separated them from all that renders life worth retaining. Look, after this, at the termination of *his* captivity, and say whether the decree of Providence was not founded in justice.

"These brave fellows were the sad remains of eight thousand soldiers and sailors, who, within the six years then expired, had fought, and bled, and died, in the pestilential climate of the West Indies, for the love of the despot and the advantage of their country.

"The Belleisle and her convoy reached Spithead early in May. The prisoners on board the

* Dupin.

transports made no efforts to rise and take the ships, though in numbers three hundred to fourteen Englishmen."

This little narrative is recommended to the serious perusal of those who may have read the aspersions of M. Dupin. That able writer has accused us of treating our prisoners with cruelty. The author himself was a witness of the whole transaction, from the first shot being fired against the island of Martinique to the arrival of the *Belleisle* at Spithead. If there was rigour in our mode of treatment—if the French had cause to complain of a long captivity—whom had they to blame but their own Baal, the god of their idolatry? The garrison of Martinique was condemned to five years' confinement in our pontons, or receptacles for prisoners.*

We have already observed that Captain Brenton had been appointed, in March, to act as Captain of the *Belleisle*, by Admiral Cochrane; but it was not till his arrival at Spithead, in this ship, in the month of May, that he was made acquainted with his having been confirmed as a captain by the Admiralty; and his commission, from which he was to take rank,

* Brenton's "Naval History," Vol. iv. p. 377.

dated on the day of his gallant action with the Cigne.

In July, Captain Brenton was ordered to assume the temporary command of the *Donegal*, 78, during the absence of Captain, afterwards Sir Pulteney Malcolm; and in this ship he conveyed the Marquis Wellesley to Cadiz, his lordship having been named Ambassador to the Supreme Junta of Seville. Captain Brenton says, "The ship arrived at Cadiz on the 1st of August, and as she let go her anchor, at nine o'clock in the morning, the batteries round the harbour, from St. Catalina to the light house, together with the guns and musketry of the shipping in the harbour, were celebrating, by continual discharges, the victory then recently obtained by the British army on the plains of Talavera. This coincidence was singular: the news of the event having just reached the city as the arrival of the British Ambassador was announced."*

This first accession to the triumph of Sir Arthur Wellesley must indeed have been truly gratifying to his noble brother.

* Naval History, Vol. iv. p. 343.

Captain Brenton having returned to England with the *Marquis*, in the month of November, relinquished his temporary command, and remained on half-pay until April, 1810, when he was appointed to the *Cyane*, a small frigate of 22 guns; and was sent with a convoy of Indiamen to the line. On his return, he was agreeably surprised to learn that he was appointed to succeed his brother, who had been severely wounded in an action in the bay of Naples, in the command of the *Spartan* (a noble frigate of 46 guns.) Mr. Yorke, then First Lord of the Admiralty, having communicated his intention of making this arrangement in the following terms, so flattering to the feelings of both the brothers.

“As it is possible that you will not be in a situation to rejoin the *Spartan* before she is ready for sea, I shall have a real pleasure in nominating your brother, Captain E. P. Brenton, to command her, on his return from his present destination; and I flatter myself such a successor will not be disagreeable to you. The ship will be in good hands.

“I beg you will consider this as a testimony of

the personal esteem and regard with which I have the honour to be,

Sir,

“Your most obedient and faithful servant,

“C. YORKE.*

“To Captain Brenton,
H. M. S. Spartan.”

In the Spartan, Captain Brenton was for some time employed in cruizing on the coast of France, and in the following year was ordered to Halifax, under the command of Vice-Admiral Sawyer. Here he was very successful, having assisted at the capture of many American privateers and merchant vessels. In 1813, the Spartan having been found in want of much repairs, returned to England, and was paid off in September. With the command of the Spartan, ended the active services of Capt. E. P. Brenton, who remained on half-pay to the close of the war. In April, 1815, he was appointed to command the Royal Sovereign, fitting for the flag of Rear-Admiral Sir Benjamin Hallowell. He shortly after followed his admiral into the Tonnant, of 80 guns; but having no desire to serve during the peace,

* Letter from Mr. Yorke to Captain Jahleel Brenton, dated 21st August, 1810.

he resigned the command in November following, and never after served afloat.

Having thus briefly related the professional services of Captain Brenton, we will proceed to the consideration of his private character, and habitual conduct in his intercourse with those around him. From his earliest infancy, he was remarkable for kindness and cheerfulness of disposition, and a flow of spirits, which rendered his society peculiarly agreeable to all who were near him. His abilities were considerable, and he lost no opportunity of improving the few advantages which were offered to him in youth. During the whole time of his servitude in the navy—whether as midshipman, lieutenant, or captain—he was remarkable for his attention to his duty, and his diligence in acquiring information. He not only sought improvement for himself, but he was equally anxious to promote a similar spirit in all who were in subordination to him. As a lieutenant, his cabin and his books were always at the service of those young people who evinced any desire for improvement; and, as a captain, he was unremitting in his exertions to instil into all the youth placed under his care,

every kind of instruction the best adapted to insure their welfare and usefulness, as far as his own knowledge and ability would enable him. In every stage of his life, he was remarkable for energy of character, and zeal for the profession in which he had engaged—a degree of zeal, indeed, which might sometimes manifest itself in apparent severity, when he saw it obviously wanting in others; and this may have led him, at times, to express himself with an unintentional harshness in conveying reprimands, or in writing, when he felt the advantage of the service or the good of his country were implicated. But, even with this admission, he was beloved by all who knew him; his motives were seen and appreciated, and his character duly estimated. But it was not only to those immediately around him, connected by the ties of consanguinity or fellowship in service, that he felt and shewed regard and attachment. The feeling extended to every class of society, not only of his own country, but to the inhabitants of every part of the world, and especially to those upon whom adversity or the sufferings of penury pressed the hardest. We may say, that he most earnestly endeavoured in thought, word, and action,

not only to mitigate, but to prevent sufferings, whenever an opportunity occurred: his life during the whole period after leaving active service in 1815, to his death in 1839, was one continued struggle in endeavouring to improve the situation of the working classes. We shall have abundant proofs of this in the extracts we are about to make from the papers he has left, and from his indefatigable labours in endeavouring to establish the Children's Friend Society, in which he succeeded, in spite of every effort that prejudice and suspicion could exert against him.

The day will come when the results of his labours will be fully known, and justice will be done to his memory. It will then be seen that he, as well as his most excellent and respectable colleagues, were actuated by the purest and most single-hearted motives. That they persevered against every discouragement and obstacle, thousands may yet bless their undertaking. The parents of the forlorn and destitute child, impelled to crime by suffering and vicious example—the child himself, and the children's children—society at large will probably at length see and acknowledge the benefit conferred upon it—and the doubtful speculation of a few philanthropic indi-

viduals, will at length, we trust, grow into a great national system, for the prevention of crime, and a provision for the industrious poor.

Every society which was formed for the improvement or the comfort of mankind, had his heartiest concurrence. When, in 1819, our destitute seamen were exposed to the most severe degree of suffering in an inclement winter, he joined his efforts to those of his brother officers, in devising means for their relief, and was eminently useful. The Temperance Societies met with his most energetic support, as may be seen by the evidence which he gave before the Committee of the House of Commons, and by his constant attendance at the meetings. The Society for the Relief of Shipwrecked Mariners and Fishermen, he also took up with great ardour, so much so indeed that to it may be attributed the immediate cause of his death.

That he felt severely the malignant reports respecting the Children's Friend Society, which were so greedily caught up and commented upon in some of the public papers about this time, and which unhappily received the too ready sanction of a respectable magistrate on the bench, is undoubtedly true, and was the source of much

occasional discomfort; but I have no doubt that the death of my lamented brother was accelerated by his denying himself that repose of body and mind which the state of his health so imperatively required.

Suffering, as he had long done, from severe and frequently-recurring attacks of gout, he continued to the last to devote his earliest and latest hours to the cause of humanity. He was frequently out of his bed at six o'clock on a winter's morning, and diligently employed at his desk, in the cause of the poor, until the breakfast hour; after which, his house was generally beset by applicants for charity or other assistance. He has often been known to leave an employment in which he was deeply engaged, in order to attend to the request of a petitioner entirely unknown to him, and would accompany him to a public office or to a magistrate, as the case might require, in order to substantiate or to forward his claim. There were many instances in which his benevolent heart was highly gratified by the success of the application, and the real merit of the individual thus befriended; but, unfortunately, there were others of a different description, where the sub-

ject proved to be a rank impostor. Such deceptions led him to feel the impolicy of giving money to street beggars, unless steps were at the same time taken to investigate their statements, and to procure for them a more effectual description of relief. This feeling will occasionally manifest itself in much of the correspondence we shall have to lay before the reader.

When, at the conclusion of the war, the subject of these memoirs retired from active service at sea, he devoted himself with the most invincible perseverance, during the remainder of his life, not only to devising the means for improving the situation of the youthful poor, to promoting their temporal and eternal welfare, and making them good and useful servants to the state, but to ameliorate the conditions of the seafaring part of our population. This was a most important object with him. He looked forward to its being the means at some distant day of enabling the legislature to dispense with the lamentable system of impressment. The workings of his mind upon this subject were incessant. Plan after plan was continually presenting itself, and abandoned as hopeless. He at length came to the conclusion, that if this most desirable end could ever be attained, it must be by preparing

the children of the working classes by early habits of industry and sobriety, and a religious education, for a profession in which they might really become the sinews of the empire. He may have been, and perhaps he was too sanguine in his expectations of the immediate benefit to be derived from the proposed adoption of his system, but it was undoubtedly based upon moral and religious principles, and consistent with the soundest policy.

It is not however so much with an intention to vindicate the measures which my brother suggested, that these observations are made, as to describe his character, and to shew how indefatigably and undeviatingly his life was devoted to the good of his country, and to that of his fellow-creatures. This merit may be confidently claimed for him, and will be, indeed has been readily conceded by those who were adverse to his opinions. The greater portion of the letters which relate to this part of the subject, and which will be found in the following pages, have already appeared in the daily newspapers, but mixed up as they necessarily were with the news of the day, and other more immediately interesting matter, they were not likely to meet with much attention; and it is but justice to the memory of

the writer of them that they should occupy a place in his memoirs in a connected form, that his exertions should be duly appreciated.

Few have been more indefatigable in their exertions, or have borne up against greater discouragement, than the subject of these memoirs; but he kept his object stedfastly in view, and was not to be set aside from his purpose by any consideration of personal inconvenience, or the ridicule he might meet with from those who differed with him in opinion, and would not appreciate his motives.

Where he thought an appeal might be made with any hope of success, he unhesitatingly offered it; and it will be seen that he acquired in this way the assistance of some of the most influential and exemplary of the higher orders of society; whilst we believe, we may safely add, that he gave offence to none: a convincing proof that he was acquitted of all selfish or arrogant intentions. The manner in which the Children's Friend Society was patronised, its public meetings attended, and the contributions made in its behalf, affords farther testimony that the opposition it has met with arose more from party feelings than any conviction of real unsoundness in its principles. Gloomy as the prospect of

this institution may be at this moment—an institution which the benevolent founder had so deeply at heart, and which was the subject of his most earnest prayers and ardent wishes—we have little doubt but that a blessing will yet rest upon it. The enquiry to which the charges brought against it have led, and their complete refutation, will inevitably restore it to that place in the public estimation which was for a moment endangered by the most atrocious falsehoods, thoughtlessly taken up by those whose opinions might naturally be expected to have great influence. The plan will, we trust, upon farther experiment, be found to be at once benevolent and practical, and to this hope we cheerfully consign it.

I have found, amongst my brother's papers, numerous memoranda upon various subjects, chiefly professional, and many quires evidently written for the instruction of youth, particularly those destined for the sea-service. The observations contained in the latter are mostly derived from his own experience in early life, in which he has recorded the workings of his own mind, as a warning against youthful errors and false impressions. It was evidently his intention to have published them, and certainly many va-

luable lessons might have been derived from them.

In whatever the subject of these memoirs engaged his thoughts, he had a constant reference to the Divine assistance for success. This may well account for the energy and perseverance with which he followed up his object; which he might have hesitated to have done, even when seeking the welfare of his fellow-creatures, had he only contemplated his own unassisted abilities: he derived strength and confidence from a never-failing source.

But with regard to that most important part of every human character, the religious part, the reader will draw his own conclusion from the various extracts I propose to give from my brother's diary. It will, I trust, thence appear to have been the governing motive of his whole life, as it was a source of comfort, happiness, and support to him in his last hour.

This diary was confined to the latter years of his life. I find none previous to 1836.

I believe that he had long been in the habit of writing down his reflections, but have met with no other memoranda of the kind. In these, however, it will be seen that he was ever mindful of the power and goodness and the wisdom of God, and placed his sole dependance upon it,

under every circumstance of life. He was particularly earnest in his thanksgivings for mercies received either by his own family or by those connected with him, as will appear by the fervent prayers he so continually offered up for them. But, especially, he most earnestly implored that sovereign aid for the schools and the children to whose cause he devoted the last years of his life. We trust that our readers will not object to our transcribing liberally from this diary, with regard to this particular subject, as it will place his exertions in the light in which they ought to be seen, and convince the most fastidious that his motives were entirely free from any selfish or worldly feelings, and that his sole object was the temporal and eternal welfare of so large a portion of his fellow-creatures.

In contemplating the character of my brother, as displayed by his sentiments and conduct in the last years of his life, I can trace the origin of these thoughts and habits to a very early period. His heart was, from infancy, kind, compassionate, and generous, and he manifested a very strong feeling of pity and indignation when he saw misery or oppression. To these youthful impressions may be traced his activity and energy at a more advanced period, to relieve and protect

the sufferer. Every case of real distress seemed to absorb his whole attention, and excite his utmost efforts to remove the cause, especially if the afflicted were children. Numberless are the instances in which he came forward in behalf of these little victims. He never could be induced to view them as criminal, however depraved their habits, or immoral their conduct. He always attributed their faults to those by whom they had been neglected or corrupted, and could never be persuaded that the case was hopeless until effort after effort had been made in vain to reclaim them, nor would he even then despair whilst youth remained. Hence his persevering efforts on behalf of juvenile vagrants of all descriptions, and his horror at the system pursued of sending children to prison to be completely corrupted and depraved by the society and example of full-grown felons. To the case of the young chimney-sweeps, or climbing boys, he devoted the utmost energy of mind and body. He was truly indefatigable in their behalf; and, on the day which preceded his death, directed and sent out above one thousand circulars, with a view of procuring the adoption of a better system.

It is an undoubted maxim, that there is much real happiness derived from the very effort to do

good, however unsuccessful it may be, and I feel convinced that Captain Brenton experienced this truth in a very eminent degree for many of the last years of his life. He appeared to live but for this purpose; all his time and all his thoughts were devoted to it. To the opposition, the sarcasm, and the ridicule he met with, he was invulnerable. He pursued his way steadily in the conviction that some good would result from his labours. He did not look to his own efforts, or to those of the excellent and the benevolent men with whom he was associated, but he looked to a power which he knew to be irresistible, and which he felt was engaged in the cause to which he devoted himself; and however gloomy the prospect may at this moment appear from the dissolution of the society of which he was the honoured founder, sure we may be, that a blessing will rest upon it—that out of the numbers which were rescued by its means from wretchedness and misery, some will come forward and offer such prominent and such incontestable proofs of the value of such an institution, that others will start up, and ultimately more than fulfil the most sanguine expectation that the warmest advocates for the Childrens' Friend Society had ever indulged in.

The object which arrested Captain Brenton's attention, on his retirement from active service afloat, was the fearful amount of juvenile delinquency in the metropolis, and the extent of crime to which children were led by those who had grown up, and some indeed grown grey in successful and accomplished villainy. The more he investigated this subject, the more awful did the state of this numerous and abandoned portion of the community appear to him. In seeking for the source of these evils, scenes were opened to him of which few can form any idea: children, the greater part under twelve years of age, congregating together under acknowledged leaders, frequently but little older than themselves, without any dwelling, or any means of support but what they derived in preying upon the public. Their usual haunts were under the dry arches of the bridges, or in desolate and untenanted houses. From these lurking places they continually sallied forth, and carried on the most successful schemes of plunder. When detected, and committed to prison, the only effect produced was a farther initiation into the arts of iniquity; and they derived, from the instruction given to them by the full-grown felons with

whom they had been associated, a degree of dexterity and cunning which, when liberated from a temporary restraint, enabled them to set the laws at defiance, with the greater assurance of impunity. He discovered, also, that the number of these wretched little beings was greatly increased by the manner in which orphans, or other destitute children, were apprenticed out to characters of every description, who, as soon as they had received the expected fee, drove the unhappy child from their dwellings by every act of cruelty and iniquity which could be devised. Captain Brenton's mind had long dwelt upon this fearful state of things, uncertain where to find or how to apply a remedy, when he was roused to active exertions by a circumstance of which he met with a detail in the public prints; but let us hear him describe this case in his own words. He says—

“In the year 1827, or thereabout, I read in the newspapers, an account of a woman named Hibner, a tambour worker, who, it appeared, had murdered two of her little female apprentices. These unhappy children were poor orphan parish girls of St. Pancras. She had six of them bound to her, and the testimony of the survivors, cor-

roborated by indisputable evidence, exposed to the public a scene of tyranny and cruelty which, I will venture to say, was never exceeded in the worst of our slave colonies.

“As my mind had for many years previously to this event been turned to the helpless and fallen condition of the children of the poor, I was particularly struck with this fresh instance of barbarity, and I immediately made myself acquainted with the process of binding parish apprentices, the motives of the guardians of the poor in getting rid of them, as well as those of the generality of tradesmen who apply for them. These poor children are generally orphans, or worse than orphans, having corrupt and drunken parents, whose pernicious example, and neglect of duty destroys the morals, while their bodily frame is emaciated, and their constitutions ruined, by want of proper food and clothing. The workhouse doors are usually thrown open to such objects as these, provided they can prove their settlement, which is too frequently very difficult, and in this case the child is left to its own resources, either to beg, or to starve, or to steal. We will, however, suppose that the wretched orphan gains its settlement, and is admitted to the workhouse

school. Its prospects in life, are little, if any thing improved. A defective and often inhuman system has never yet produced any good fruits, and the child, if it obtains relief from cold and hunger, has nothing to boast of, in point of education and moral training, above the street beggar. It has rarely fallen to my lot to witness the application of a respectable tradesman for an apprentice out of the workhouse. They are usually needy people, greedy only for the premium of four or five pounds; and this sum is often given to take the child away from the parish books, as soon as the little victim has gone through a probation of five or six weeks, and a *pro forma* enquiry has been made into the character of the applicant. The probationary weeks are a sort of honeymoon, during which the children are kindly treated, in order that they may express the same before the guardians when the indentures are given and the money paid; but after this, I fear the conduct of the master or mistress too often undergoes a very material change. I have known many instances of the child having been starved, beaten, or driven from the house by cruel treatment; and

on enquiry we have learned that the receiver of the premium has gone into the Gazette."

Impressed with such conviction of the deplorable state of so large a portion of the juvenile part of the working classes in London, Captain Brenton, with a few active and benevolent friends, set to work, and after the most unwearied exertions were enabled, in 1830, to begin an Institution, under the title of, "A Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy." These excellent men, whose names should always be associated with that of the subject of these memoirs, must excuse my inserting them here. I should neglect an obvious, a positive duty in withholding them. They were J. F. Maubert, D. Haes, R. Ricardo, Henry Wood, A. Borradaile, and J. M. White, Esqrs., all well known for their active benevolence, and their characters such as might have been a sufficient pledge that none of the charges which were so industriously and so malignantly brought against the Society could have had any foundation.

The Society was formed with a view of training poor and destitute or partially depraved children, to such habits as would fit them for useful service in this country. The first experi-

ment was made at West Ham Abbey, near Bow, in Essex, in 1830, where twenty boys, "whose forlorn and neglected condition," says the Report, "gave them a just claim on the compassion and benevolence of a Christian public," were received. In 1833, the establishment was removed to Hackney Wick, and named by the members of the Institution, the "Brenton Juvenile Asylum," as a testimony of their feeling towards Captain Brenton; and soon after the Society adopted for their own designation that of the "Children's Friend Society." In 1834, Her Most Gracious Majesty, then Princess Victoria, and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, graciously condescended to become the general patronesses of the Society. An asylum for *female* children was opened at Chiswick, and, by permission, named the "Royal Victoria Asylum." Such is the origin of the Children's Friend Society as it exists at present.*

The few observations we are about to make respecting this truly philanthropic Institution will, we trust, enable us successfully to repel

* We lament to say, that since this was written the benevolent managers of the Society have been under the necessity of dissolving it for want of funds.

and refute every malignant charge which has been made against it, and which to such an extraordinary degree met with encouragement from men in authority and from writers of acknowledged talent, as would be utterly unaccountable, were not a solution found in the spirit of party, and most particularly in that warfare so pertinaciously carried on between the approvers and opponents of the late and present poor law system. Here, we are well convinced, we have found the real cause of the opposition, we may rather say, of the persecution, this excellent Society has met with, which undoubtedly did inflict much pain upon the mind of its truly benevolent and Christian founder, but which he endured with cheerful resignation, in the conscientious feeling that it was unmerited.

As an introduction to the account of what the Society has already effected by their exertions, we will make a short extract from its history, contained in a little work published by Captain Brenton, called "The Bible and Spade."

"It is four years since the Society relinquished the school at West Ham, and hired the premises we now occupy at Hackney Wick, where we have good accommodation for two hundred boys,

a capital house for the master, with ten acres of land: the whole of this is cultivated and kept in order by the pupils, of whom we have had one hundred and fifty at one time. The first year of our occupation, the produce of the land was not more than thirty pounds; the second year, this sum was more than doubled. The produce of this land in former years was, probably, not a twentieth part of this, as to human subsistence, as it is very poor land, and the improving fertility has arisen from the well-managed appropriation of that redundant labour and economy of manure which had hitherto been either unemployed, or used in the destruction of property and putrefaction of the air in wretched abodes. Whatever, then, the pecuniary advantages may appear, they are nothing when compared to the moral effect produced on the minds and habits of the children, who, coming as it were, wild from the hot beds of vice and lawless indulgence, are rapidly brought into habits of order, regularity, and obedience, and this without the agency of any other means than kindness and firmness. We have no whips nor rods, although we have had many unruly spirits to deal with. Each boy freely gives his own personal labour and indivi-

dual exertions to the well being of the general hive. Our object, as far as human prudence can guide us, is the harmony with the Holy Scriptures and the divine command, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

The earliest notice I have been able to find of the commencement of Captain Brenton's efforts in behalf of the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy is from the "Morning Herald," of the 14th March, 1830. He had, I believe, been long before the public in his addresses upon the subject, nor did he appeal in vain.

"It is not a little extraordinary, that at a moment when, by the indefatigable exertions of Captain Brenton, a society has been established for the purpose of clearing the streets of unemployed children, who swell the daily catalogue of juvenile offenders, and when the Colonial Secretary has been induced to aid in transferring a number of these children to the Cape of Good Hope, the Home Department should persist in maintaining at home a constant nursery for thieves, in the abominable hulk system. In addition to the crowd of adult convicts, who, after having been sentenced to transportation,

are kept at home to do the work of honest men, and are, in fact, better fed than the soldiers who guard them, there are at this time on board the *Euryalus*, convict hulk, at Chatham, 407 boys, between the ages of nine and sixteen years. With the exception that, like Sterne's starling, 'they cannot get out,' these boys are better clothed, better fed, and in all other respects happier and better off than nine-tenths of the children of industrious parents throughout the kingdom. Nor would this be so much to be regretted, were it not equally the fact, that notwithstanding all the pains which we doubt not are taken to bring them up in the paths of honesty and virtue, the very *locale*, the very congregation in one point of so many juvenile depredators renders every effort of the kind, as a whole, impossible. And the result, therefore, is, that while a few individuals, aided to a slight degree by one department of the Government, are endeavouring to rescue children from destruction, and society from their depredations, another and more important department is actually countenancing distinct nurseries of crime, with a recklessness which would seem to assume that it is necessary for the maintenance of our

criminal and judicial establishments that, like our anatomical schools, they should be constantly supplied with *subjects*.

“ We trust that some Member of Parliament will cause an inquiry to be instituted into the continuance of this demoralising system. The non-transportation of offenders, after they have been sentenced to undergo that punishment, is, we understand, justified on the score of expense. But this is the most mistaken, ‘penny-wise’ argument that can be employed. It, doubtless, is very true that the first expense of shipping off a convict to New South Wales is greater than his maintenance for the period of the voyage on board the hulks. But is it so in the end? or ought it, even if it were to be allowed, to stand in competition with the injury inflicted both on society and the individual, by the latter being detained at home, and, in fact, trained up in the same vicious courses which have already brought him in contact with the offended laws of his country? And, above all things, is it wise, just, or reasonable, that the country should be at the expense of expatriating the most valuable part of its population, while its criminal transports are allowed to be such only in name?

We pause for any defence of any thing so incongruous."

The first public letter I can find of Captain Brenton's is the following, addressed to the Editor of the "Morning Post." It is truly gratifying to reflect upon the liberal aid he received from so many of the editors of our most respectable daily newspapers, who readily devoted their columns to the insertion of his letters, and to their admirable remarks upon the subject of them. I feel that I am only doing justice to them, to my departed brother, and to our country, in thus collecting and publishing in a connected form, a series of suggestions and reflections which have arisen from so pure and so benevolent a source, and for such an invaluable object.

"To the Editor of the Morning Post.

"SIR—I am exceedingly thankful to you for inserting my letter of the 21st inst. in your paper of to-day, and with your permission I will continue the subject, which, as I before observed, is unhappily inexhaustible. That there is no want of kindly feeling among the rich towards their poorer brethren in this country no one, I think, will deny; at the same time it is evident that

nothing is more difficult than to give a strong and effective direction to this feeling, so as to promote any permanent good among the labouring classes. The metaphor of a ship of war embayed in a gale of wind on a lee shore is almost threadbare; but the parallel between such a situation at sea and the present state of the British Islands is so forcibly impressed on the mind, that it is quite impossible to separate them. And is nothing to be done? Are we to stand with our arms folded, and see the ship go to pieces, each one flattering himself that he shall be able to reach the land on some shattered portion of the wreck? Or shall we, like stout-hearted true-blooded Englishmen, face the danger and disarm the storm?

“While the Legislature is debating on the momentous question of Reform, the people are looking for its adoption as a cure for all their temporal ills. Of the merits or expediency of such a measure I have nothing to say. I see crime and misery increase, and I ask if there be any cure, *any* palliative, for such complicated evils? I contend that there are; that they are within our grasp; that we have only to stretch forth our hands and seize them. The scourge from heaven, the cholera morbus, has reached

our shores, and seems to me as if sent in mercy to rouse us from our torpor, not to thin our population, which has been blasphemously called 'redundant,' but to teach us the value of man to man—the reciprocal and mutual dependence of the rich on the poor. Should this desolating pestilence pass over our islands as it has done through the Continent of India, what would then become of our 'redundant population?' The disease seems to fix its fangs at present in the lowly dwelling of poverty; the poor raise their despairing eyes to heaven, and stretch forth their emaciated hands to their richer and more fortunate brethren. Under the blessing of Providence much has been done; but let us not faint, for much remains to do; the abodes of vice and poverty and filth must be *visited*, cleansed, purified, and relieved. The dense inmates of the small dwellings must be skilfully and kindly separated, and planted out into more wholesome locations; agriculture must take place of manufactures to a certain degree; food must be produced more abundantly by manual labour; the desert must be made to smile; and the poor man, instead of being shut up in a gaol as a poacher, will be the best guardian of the game. This is

no Utopian theory; it is an axiom at once simple and practicable; nothing is required but the will, and 'where there is a will there is always a way.' Let every parish (even of the metropolis) take its 50 acres; let us set out all the unemployed to work; let the good be rewarded, the bad rejected; let the honest man have his half acre and his cottage and his pig, and let the vagabond who will not work be sent to coercive labour in our harbours and rivers; let our streets and alleys and sewers be cleansed of all their filth, and let it be converted into manure to *enrich the fields*. By these means mutual exertion will produce mutual good; the agriculturalist will have food to give to the manufacturer; the latter will find the former in clothing, and the whole will become good and loyal subjects. Let us not fear a redundancy of people, nor a rise in the price of labour; if the farmer gives 14s. a week instead of 9s., he will have no poor rates to pay, and the superior cultivation of his land will enable him to give his tithes ungrudgingly; all this may be done without any legislative enactment; the poors' rate, as at present levied, is more than sufficient for the purpose, and in two years we shall see a wonderful change in the face of the

country. Finally, the bitterest enemies of this or any other land are those who endeavour to decry the Scriptures, to vilify the clergy, and to sow hatred and discord among the people. The best friends of the poor are those who will stand by them in sickness and in health, and who fearlessly do their duty to God and their neighbours.

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“Dec. 26, 1831.”

It will be observed in the following letter, that all the subjects to which it successively alludes, are immediately connected with the interests of the poorer classes. That not only their sufferings form the great object of the writer's solicitude, but that he considers their vices to grow out of the state of degradation in which they are placed. If the strictures upon absenteeism appear hackneyed or common-place, so will all other arguments in support of the same cause, for all have been urged to repletion; but as long as the cause exists, the efforts to remove it must be repeated. A remedy may at length be suggested to those who may have it in their power to apply it.

The observations with which this letter concludes are most striking, and certainly borne out

by facts. We have frequently seen the ragged and destitute sailor in vain imploring to be admitted in the service, but rejected from that very state of destitution and wretchedness, whilst the convict has been in the enjoyment of food, shelter and clothing.

“To the Editor of the Morning Post.

“SIR,—Not having the honour of being personally known to any of his Majesty’s Ministers, and having found from experience that the letters and representations of a stranger are coldly received and barely acknowledged, if acknowledged at all, however important the matter, or however self-evident the proposition, it only remains for a humble individual like myself to lay my opinions before the public. If they are worth any thing, they will in some shape or other receive the attention they deserve; or if they do not, I shall, at least, have the satisfaction of knowing that I have done my duty.

“It has always appeared to me that our *former* Parliaments have ‘stuck at a gnat and swallowed a camel;’ that while the Poor Laws and their concomitant evils have been almost unheeded, the precious time of the Senate, night after night,

has been wasted over the trumpery and indecent details of a divorce case, or in the passing of private Inclosure Bills, which still more limited and curtailed the resources of the peasantry, expelling them from their commons, depriving them of their honest and healthy means of subsistence, and obliging them to seek refuge in the large towns, where, between the pawnbroker and the gin-shop, they very soon become inmates of a workhouse, or outcasts of society. Had we taken as much care to protect our poor as we have to protect our game, the former had been happy, and the latter more abundant. The proceedings of the Suffolk Agricultural Meeting are an honour to the country, and to human nature. May its spirit be spread over the land, until every labouring man finds a friend and a brother in his richer neighbour; and may the landlord find in every peasant a faithful gamekeeper, and a zealous defender of his property.

“While I admit the vices and the crimes of the poor, I fear that in too many instances they have arisen out of their sufferings; in others, their sufferings have been produced by their vices; but while gin is easy to be procured, while the poor are huddled together in suffocating

rooms in large towns, and the open country is abandoned, we may hourly look for a dreadful increase, but we can have no rational hope of a diminution either of their crimes or their miseries.

“I have long thought that some of the greatest causes of distress are to be found in absenteeism, in the want of a due regulation of our Poor Laws, and the establishment of legal provision for the poor in Ireland, in emigration, and in our convict system. On these four heads, to which I shall at present confine myself, I will with your leave make a few observations.

“It has been reported to me, but I will not vouch for the fact, though I am much inclined to believe it, that the sum of eight millions annually is spent by our absentees. If this be true to the extent of only one half, it is quite sufficient to account for the low price of labour, and the sufferings and discontent of that valuable class of society; and I contend that absentees should be taxed unmercifully—that no person holding an income from the government should be allowed to spend it out of the country. If all absentees were compelled to return home, the price of labour would immediately rise—a proposition too clear to require elucidation. If they would not

return they should be compelled to pay a heavy contribution towards the support of the state.

“That a system of parochial relief should be established in Ireland, no one, who has common sense or common humanity can deny; but while this should only extend to the helpless, a proper and liberal plan for supporting the labourer must be devised. This can only be done by allotments of land; there is land enough, and to spare; when it is covered with tillage it will be time to think of emigration. I have often heard of ‘burnings,’ but I never heard of any thing so barbarous, cruel, and selfish as that which took place on the estate of an Irish nobleman, about two years ago, when some poor people were burnt out by order of the landlord.

“I will not stop to ask whether this hard-hearted man had law on his side; I conclude he had, or else I should have had the satisfaction of hearing that he was hanged; but I will tell him that, if *man* does not, God *will* call him to a severe account for this. Nor can that country ever hope to be tranquil or prosperous where such deeds are done and tolerated. The act was at once cruel and silly; the land itself was of little value, and not likely to be of much more when

man was driven from its surface. Had these poor people been placed upon it with long leases, and a condition that they should grow corn as well as potatoes, and keep pigs and cows, how much would the value of the estate have been enhanced, and how happy would the people have been? After the above statement, which I read, I think, in the 'Morning Post,' and which was never contradicted, I am never surprised at any thing I hear from Ireland, and I warn the landed proprietors of that country to look more to the comforts of their peasantry, in which they will find their truest interest. Their revenue should be spent among the hardy race whose labour produced it, not squandered in France and Italy among buffoons and fiddlers. Such absentees should be taxed even to confiscation. Why should the industrious rate-payers of England be compelled to support the Irish labourer, while the money which ought to support him is spent in a foreign country? Why should the English labourer be undersold in the market, because the Irish labourer is not provided for at home? If there be a union indeed between the two countries, why are not the laws more nearly assimilated, and the balance of labour restored to an equilibrium. There is a nobleman (noble only

by title) who, to my certain knowledge, has lived in Paris for the last sixteen years, and whose estates in this country and in Ireland are said to be of enormous value. If such a man was so fortunate as to escape the arm of justice, should not his property be taxed? Why should the peasantry on his estates starve while the produce of their labour is spent in the Champs Elysées.

“Emigration is the next evil of which I complain. I find by the Canadian Reports that 70,000 people arrived out from this kingdom during the last season. Had these been actual paupers, or people who had been hangers-on of the workhouses, we might have borne their absence with equanimity; but they were not so. They were mostly enterprising and industrious, and must have taken away with them at least half a million of money—a dead loss to the country, while the farmer, the manufacturer, and the state, have lost all the benefit of their annual expenditure. This is political economy with a vengeance. This is what I pointed out to Sir Robert Wilmot Horton last year; and, thanks to the Emigration Committee, this is what will be constantly repeated until all the industrious labourers have left the land and universal pauperism shall prevail.

"My letter is already too long, but you must pardon me for saying a few words on the convict system. This pernicious practice has long been the subject of my thoughts, and I have in every way held it up to public reprobation as one of the most ingenious devices of the devil for making converts to vice, and completely corrupting the manners of the labouring classes. Rogues, felons, and vagabonds are employed in peace, plenty and comfort in our dock-yards and arsenals, well fed, well clothed, well housed; their wives and children, if they have any, sent to the parish; while the honest poor man is sighing for that labour and that bread which is only to be given to atrocious crime. I have laid a statement of this case before those who have the power to apply a remedy, and I will never cease to call the public attention to this shameful practice until it is done away. Talk of the decline and fall of empires! I maintain that no history of any nation can produce a more fatally livid mark of pestilence in its constitution than the convict system of Great Britain.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

"Dec. 30, 1831."

The following letter to the Right Hon. Lord Kenyon, on the impolicy of the workhouse system, and its pernicious effects on the manners and habits of the poor, has already gone through the press, and has been widely circulated; but it is too important a document to be omitted in this place, and will be highly useful in shewing how strenuous were the exertions of the writer in his advocacy for the suffering poor.

“MY LORD,—Public men, like your lordship, who devote their time and their talents to the alleviation of the sufferings of their fellow-creatures, must expect to be addressed as I now take the liberty of addressing you: the subject is of vital importance, and I feel assured that you will give it all the attention it deserves.

“To provide for the necessities of our fellow-creatures is admitted to be a fundamental principle in all civilized governments, — that the helpless poor should be taken care of, and treated with kindness and attention, is also conformable to the Scriptures; and whatever may have been the result, I am proud to say that there has been no want of good-will and generosity in this country, evinced by the opulent towards their less fortunate neighbours. Still

it is mortifying to reflect, that notwithstanding all the laws, from the reign of Henry VII. down to our time, which have been made in favour of the poor, we find their numbers, their vices, and their miseries, constantly increasing; and although the contributions under the name of poor's-rates alone amount to the sum of eight millions and upwards yearly, and private charity to as much more, still there is no country which I have visited where there is so much privation and wretchedness as in this, excepting only unhappy Ireland. I know of no poor laws on the Continent, yet the poor are better off than they are here; and I will shew more real misery in one hour, in Marylebone, St. Giles's, White-chapel, Spitalfields, or Paddington, than can be shewn in six months in the West Indies, from Trinidad to Jamaica. But here we have our workhouses, our jails, our penitentiaries, our tread-mills, our convict system, and our prison discipline, and yet we go on from bad to worse; may we not then reasonably conclude that the system is false—that it does not work—that it has never produced any good result—and that the sooner it is changed the better.

“ Ever since I became acquainted with work-

houses, I have been their uncompromising enemy :

“1. As being fraught with the very germ and essence of all moral depravity—the University of Vice—the hive from whence the vagrants swarm in summer, and to which they resort in winter, after having squandered their earnings in debauchery, careless of the future, because they are sure of food and lodging during the inclement season.

“2. Because they confound virtue and vice; the virtuous object, driven within its walls by the inscrutable decrees of Providence, is herded with the most depraved, at the same table, and perhaps in the same bed.

“3. Because they afford relief to the idle and the vicious. They encourage parents to spend their earnings in gin, leaving their children to beg, without removing them from the haunts of infamy.

“4. Because they too often relieve the poor with money, which is spent in gin; a gin-shop near a workhouse always bearing a higher premium on lease than those at greater distance.

“5. Because the workhouses, particularly in the metropolis, occupy valuable ground, which

might be let, and produce as much revenue as would pay for the hire of good land, on which the poor might be maintained in comfort for ever; and because they fill the metropolis, and all large towns with an undue number of paupers, thereby encouraging beggary and sedition, destroying industry, and defeating the best intentions, and the only means of relieving them by agricultural labour.

“6. Because the offscourings and refuse, or manure, instead of being spread over the surface of the land, as the wise and beneficent Author of nature intended, to reproduce food, are allowed to drain into our river, to pollute our water, and to corrupt the air.

“7. Because high walls are built round these receptacles of misery, shutting out in a great measure the winds of heaven, and producing on the inmates the confinement of a prison, without any imputed crime; whereas, if they were placed in the country, all, or nearly all, restriction would be done away with as useless and unnecessary.

“8. Because the manufactories carried on within the workhouses must injure the industrious tradesman, exactly in the same proportion that they are profitable to the establishment.

The poor mechanic, having rent and taxes to pay, can never compete with those who pay none, and who work with a capital not their own: consequently the poor's-rate tends to keep down the price of labour.

“9. Because the labour of the workhouse is *not* agricultural, of which there is not enough performed in the country, and *is* mechanical, of which there is too much. And

“10. Because the education of the boys is corrupt, expensive, and mischievous in its results.

“It would, I conceive, be a waste of time to prove these propositions: nevertheless, if proof be required, I am ready to produce it. Let us in the meantime consider if some other plan might not be substituted to relieve the poor, and to make them more happy and more industrious; to enable them to enjoy the fruits of their own labour; to rescue them from the crowded mansions of disease and crime, and to place them, with the capital which is now used for their destruction, where they will become useful to themselves and to their country.

“It is admitted, by statistical authors, that we have, at least, fifteen millions of acres of improvable land: this land, at present, yields little

or no revenue to its owners, simply because the presence and labour of man is wanted to make it profitable. If, then, a workhouse of a populous parish were fixed on some wide extended waste, or improvable land, or on good land, it is fair to suppose that the annual expenditure of such an establishment, though great at first, would gradually diminish, like an inverted cone, until it ended in a point. One thing is certain, that in no case could it be so expensive or so injurious in its consequences as at present. If a large draft were made from the parish of St. Marylebone to a district ten or fifteen miles off, there would be better employment for those who remained; while those who went would be, at least, free from the ravages of disease, or temptation to the vice of drunkenness. This of itself would be an immense gain; but the habits of cleanliness and industry would so improve the condition of these people, that they would, in all human probability, never revert to their former state.

“I admit, that a change of system so extensive requires much and very mature consideration. I do not wish to press it hastily on the public, although I am thoroughly convinced, that if the experiment were once made, it would very soon be universally adopted.

“The plan proposed is simple, and not difficult of application. A tract of land, consisting of from fifty to five hundred acres, should either be immediately taken, or an option of occupancy secured. On this land a suitable residence should be built for a governor, surgeon, apothecary, chaplain, and other officers. A bailiff should be appointed to attend to the farming concerns, and ten constables. The governor should be an officer, either naval or military, not exceeding forty-five years of age; his salary, in lieu of his half-pay, should be £300 per annum, which would be a saving to the government; the other officers should be paid and established in the same proportion; the medical men should always reside on the spot. The next object would be to build alms-houses and cottages for the reception of the deserving poor, and for labourers, with a certain portion of land attached to each; and the rent of the latter should be paid by labour, which is the poor man’s money: if he can produce more labour than is required for this purpose, the overplus should be carried to his credit, until it amounted to as much as would purchase the freehold; or, in a few words, I would follow the plan which has been so successful in Holland,

where the poor vagrants, removed from the scenes of idleness and temptation, have acquired property, and become reputable members of society.

“I have often listened with horror to the hateful objection set forth by some political economist, viz., ‘that the poor, if made comfortable, would increase too fast!!!’ Dare any man publicly avow this cruel, this selfish, this murderous and atheistical proposition? I will tell him, that he is confuted by common sense, common experience, and well-known facts; but, were it true as it is false, have not the poor as good a right to live as the rich? Is the order of Nature to be counteracted for the pleasure of the few and the destruction of the many? for if these reasoners mean any thing, this is what they do mean: away, then with such atrocity—let us do our duty, and leave the event to Providence.

“Females may be employed in agriculture as well as males: we see this practised on the Continent of Europe. And while our manufactories and our shops reject these dependent creatures, let us stand between them and ruin, by holding out that manly protection, which, as

men and as Britains, they have a right to expect from us. £100,000 expended in sending 8,000 or 10,000 of these unhappy women to the Colonies, would be well laid out; there they are wanted, and would be useful; here they are a burthen to themselves, and to their country. This is the only species of emigration which I would admit of, and this only to a limited extent; we could find occupation for the others at home.

“Our ancestors very wisely placed their workhouses far away from towns; but, in our days, the growth of cities has surrounded and walled them in, depriving the inmates of their health-giving fields; the land which the workhouses now occupy, has increased in value one-hundred fold; then why not remove them to another station, where the poor might enjoy their air and exercise. A rural asylum so placed would not require all that expensive establishment of officers and attendants, which costs in the parish of St. Marylebone about £5,000 per annum. There would be no need of coercion or restraint—few would have recourse to it but the really distressed, and none that were not disposed to work: the boys, instead of being mewed up within brick-walls, would expand their lungs,

and strengthen their limbs, by manly exercise and labour; while their morals would escape the inevitable contagion of the metropolis. If they thought proper to absent themselves, it should be at their own cost and peril, but there would no longer be any pretence for begging, when refuge would be provided for all. Labour should be performed by task:—emulation would then be excited, and merit would be sure of its reward.

“We have not a sufficient number of almshouses in England. There are a number of deserving people, particularly among servants of both sexes, who, late in life, are driven to great distress; these people, when compelled to take refuge in a workhouse, feel it as the keenest calamity, and they die broken-hearted.

“Infirmaries should be as much on the skirts of the town as possible—that of St. Marylebone should be in St. John’s Wood.

“It will be necessary to say a few words on the recent Act of William IV. cap. 59, which I shall call ‘the Fifty Acre Act,’ because it was intended to empower large parishes to take that quantity of waste land whereon to employ their supernumerary hands; before this Act was passed, parishes were restricted to twenty acres. This

extension I hailed as the dawning of some good feeling towards the poor; but when, by desire of the Guardians of St. Marylebone, I applied to Lord Melbourne, to know where and upon what terms we could have our fifty acres, I was referred to the Office of Woods and Forests: the following is an extract of the answer:—

“‘That the Board have not considered the Act of the 1st and 2nd of William the IVth, cap. 59, to extend to any parish except such as the waste land applied for, *should be situated in or near to*, and that it appears that the powers of this Act would not be applicable to the parish of St. Marylebone.’ Admitting this construction, (which I do not) then the Act is a mere nullity, and a disgrace to the Statute Book; for if it cannot relieve the metropolitan parishes, what use can it be of to parishes surrounded with waste land, which always had the power and never required permission to use it? but I contend that the undefinable and relative term ‘*near to*,’ may be stretched or contracted *ad libitum* to one foot or one hundred miles.

“These suggestions are submitted to your lordship as the active and zealous friend to the rural population. The greedy enclosure of waste

lands, owing to the high price of corn during the war, had the effect of driving the poor from their commons, and forcing them to seek shelter in manufactories and workhouses. Thus the population is gathered into unwholesome heaps, to the manifest injury of the people and the land. The constitutions of the children are destroyed by over-work, bad air, and insufficient food; while their moral and religious habits, if they ever had any, are soon contaminated and destroyed by corrupt associations. The dense masses of Manchester, Birmingham, and Spitalfields must be thinned out, and spread over the neglected country, before disease and famine shall have done their fatal work. The Mendicity Society must cease its pernicious labours, and, as I told them two years ago, employ their money by finding work for the poor *out* of town, instead of inducing them to seek a precarious and ruinous trade in a crowded city. Vestries and guardians of the poor must no longer pay their labourers from the poor's rates—a practice alike ruinous and disgraceful; the price of labour must be raised by the application of the capital of the poor's rate to *agriculture*, and not lowered, by adding to manufactures already overstocked. It

is notorious that the misapplication of the rates tends to keep down the price of labour, and there are many farmers and landowners (not discerning their true interests) who wish to have it so: such a system, if not speedily counteracted, will ultimately destroy all property. To attempt to relieve the poor by emigration is insulting and cruel, and also contrary to every principle of justice and sound policy. All the shipping of the empire could not convey out of the country in three years as many people as would afford relief to the pretended redundancy—and if they could be conveyed away, we should soon see the empire die of exhaustion, instead of plethora, land uncultivated, and shops unlet.

“The Labourer’s Friend Society, of which your lordship is so generous a patron, will do more to forward the real permanent interests of the poor, and of the empire at large, than all the Emigration Committees that ever sat. Give the poor man his land and his spade—his industry will soon produce the rest: he will become a payer instead of a receiver of rates. The face of the country will be changed; the price of labour will rise, and the price of land will rise, and the rich and the poor will all be better off than they

are now. The manufacturer will sell more goods; the farmer will sell more corn and meat; the merchant will sell more tea, and sugar, and coffee, and soap, and candles; in short every thing will find a market but gin and brandy.

“Mr. Thomas Wright, of Plumstead, has constantly acted on this plan: he has raised the price of labour, and gives employment to a vast number of people who would otherwise have been on the parish. Your lordship at our last meeting furnished us with an account equally encouraging from your own estates, where you reported that in a population of 2,500, only one man was out of work. The Bishop of Bath and Wells on the same occasion favoured us with another report to the same effect—proving, that wherever the poor had been placed on their half or three quarter acre, they had ceased from that time to ask parochial relief.

“It is not intended by this plan to supersede the authority of the guardians and directors of the poor, or to make the poor chargeable to other parishes; their attendance at their respective establishments will be provided for; but as the governor will be a highly responsible person, it is presumed that the presence of the guardians will not be so much required.

“Finally, if we would restore the rural population, and that of the kingdom generally, to the sound state of moral and religious feeling, from which they have unhappily fallen, we must provide for them in a different manner to what we have hitherto done. The disturbance in the workhouse of St. Marylebone on Saturday night last, the 7th instant, confirms much, if not the whole of my objections to such establishments, and forcibly points to the necessity of sending these unhappy girls to the colonies, where they all wish to go: but under any circumstances, no plan can be so fatal to public happiness and industry, as locating the poor among the mechanics who cannot find work for themselves. Every person out of work should therefore be sent to agricultural labour.

“I have the honour to be, with great respect,

“My Lord,

“Your Lordship’s most obedient servant,

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“April 9th, 1832.”

The reader will, we are certain, receive with indulgence the following effusions of a sanguine mind, devoted to a favourite subject, and that subject no less than the welfare of thousands of

the writer's fellow-creatures and fellow-countrymen: he expressed himself warmly, as he felt, when deeply interested. Nor will the earnest appeal contained in the next letter be read unmoved.

"To the Editor of the Morning Post.

"SIR,—Referring to the advertisement sent herewith in the first page of your journal, relative to the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy, will you allow me to call the public attention to it? Should it be followed up with that care on the part of the Committee, and that bounty on the part of the public, which it so eminently deserves, it may at no distant period be the means, under the blessing of Providence, of changing the manners and so totally altering and improving the condition of the labouring classes, as to render them the happiest and the best people on the face of the earth. Let us look to it; undismayed by the lowering of the political atmosphere, or the neglect of my complaints in every department of the Government, I confidently and fearlessly appeal to the British public. *They* will not, I am certain, allow these poor children to be again turned

out into the streets—on the contrary, they will hasten, by paying in their 5s. subscriptions, to enable the society to receive many more of the numerous candidates for admission within its walls. To the want of agricultural education for the children of the poor, and the inattention of the guardians and select vestries to these locations in the field, may justly be attributed almost *all* our present ills—cholera, drunkenness, starvation, beggary, theft, misery. I have often warned the public of the fatal tendency of this culpable apathy. Our soldiers, our sailors, and our peasantry are daily becoming more corrupt, and losing sight of that love of country, for which the Swiss are so remarkable, and which is the best safeguard of the state. I cannot occupy your useful paper with a long letter, but you will, I am sure, kindly insert the following fact, by way of illustration; it very lately occurred:

“A little boy, thirteen years of age, of remarkable talent, applied to the Marine Society to be received on board of their ship; he was rejected because his height did not come up to the standard—he fell into bad company, was taken up with his companion who had stolen something from a shop, and sentenced to seven years transportation!!! The unhappy boy, as soon as he

knew his fate, wrote an excellent letter to his distracted mother (I wish I could obtain the letter, but I cannot); he offers her all the consolation in his power, assures her he had no intention of committing a crime, that he had long sought in vain for employment, and now that he was to leave her he hoped that he should make amends by his future conduct for her past sufferings on his account.

“This poor boy has been lost by our neglect, and thousands of others will follow his example.

“I am, sir, your obedient servant,

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“Aug. 23, 1832.”

“*To the Editor of the Morning Post.*

“SIR—Woe be to that land where the children of the poor cry in vain for bread and for shelter: such is their state at this moment in England, and more particularly in London. Long, long have I pleaded their cause, but how few, alas! will pay any attention. The House of Correction in Coldbath Fields has within its walls some hundreds of children and young people, whose offences are mostly trivial, and grew out of want and idleness. Many poor little boys are shut up among thieves for robbing orchards and fruit gar-

dens! There is scarcely a member of the House of Commons who did not do as much when he was young. One of our best officers in the navy, as gallant a fellow as ever trod a deck, always robbed his schoolmaster's fruit wall, and told him he would do it, because he once punished him unjustly. Had he been sent to Coldbath Fields for it, he would now have been a convict instead of an ornament to the service, which he is. But we are trying all we can to drive the infant poor to vice and crime, to eradicate a sense of shame from their bosoms, then call them thieves and vagabonds, whip them, imprison them, and then turn them out better prepared to elude justice, and to commit crimes of increased magnitude, in proportion to the severity with which they have been treated. Shall we wonder that with such a system crimes increase? We hang, without remorse, the hapless mother who, under the pressure of want, strangles her new-born babe; but *her humanity* is greater than ours, who let the poor children die of want, or convert them to criminals by neglect. I first undertook the cause of these helpless creatures when that miserable woman, Hibner, was hanged for starving and beating her apprentices, two of whom died under

her cruel hands. Your fine-spun theorists prate about West India cruelty; let them look at home. We murder our children body and soul in this country, by neglect, starvation, and cruelty. In the West Indies, the children of the slaves are treated with the same kindness as those of the family; and whether in French, English, or Dutch settlements, I have never seen so much misery in six months in that country as I can shew you in *ten* minutes in this. I am perfectly at a loss to know why I am not supported by the government, and by the magistrates in quarter sessions. It is certain that the children in Cold-bath Fields cost the country, one with another, nearly a shilling a day to keep them in that house, and to employ them in picking oakum! How is a young creature to earn its bread with such an education? I offer to make them happy, healthy, virtuous, and loyal, for half the money; aye, and to make them maintain themselves too; but very few listen to me. Some say very wisely, what is to become of them when they are educated? I say, what is to become of them when they are not? Look at your gaols at this moment; look at your calendar; that answers my question; and if you look at our little Asylum at West Ham, the

other question is much better answered. Our poor boys are reclaimed and happy, without police, or iron bar, or flogging. One of the parishes, rather than pay the cost of a child's keep at our school, threatened to take him away and set him to *stone-breaking*; but the boy declared that if they did so he would instantly commit a felony and be transported! Can you blame him? Convicts are better off than honest labourers, though it costs double the money to keep a thief to what it would for an honest man! All I ask of the government is, a ship to lay at Woolwich, and twenty acres of land near the water side, with a certain allowance for each child. I will, in return, promise never to let a boy go to prison under sixteen years of age; and for the poor girls, there are plenty of *places*, such as the Greenwich School, Chelsea School, and the House of Occupation, where they might be protected and educated before they became thieves and prostitutes; and if that were not enough, I would also have a ship for them to lay off Woolwich, and have them trained to such work as would make them useful in our colonies, where they are much wanted. Oh, England! England! how blind to your own interests! Oh, ye check-population

philosophers, what have you got to answer for? Read my letter to the king, and you will see.*

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“Oct. 5, 1832.”

“To the Editor of the Morning Post, and the Editors of all the really benevolent and patriotic Newspapers in the United Kingdom.

“GENTLEMEN,—I have often appealed through your kindness to the British public, and never appealed in vain, in behalf of the destitute children of the poor. Their numbers and their extreme misery cannot, I should think, fail to meet the eye and to excite the compassion of any person of common feeling. The success which I have met with, and the support which a numerous and respectable list of subscribers to the Juvenile Vagrancy Society have afforded me, while they stimulate to further exertion, shew the urgent necessity of it. Each day presents more numerous and more distressed objects than the preceding one; and many a hapless mother and weeping boy am I compelled to dismiss from my door, and resign to despair and to ruin, for want of the means of supporting them in our Agricultural Asylum at West Ham. That such

* This letter has not been found.

an Institution should have enemies and detractors, is not surprising. It is only human, and has but slender means of achieving all the good which is proposed. We are accused of having misapplied the funds placed at our disposal. We answer, that those who gave us the money meant and intended that it should be used exactly in the way in which we have used it. We have expended, in round numbers, one thousand pounds. We have received sixty-two boys; fifty of them are now in the house. We dare assert, in the face of our anonymous assailants, that the experiment has infinitely exceeded our most sanguine expectations. These poor boys, who were mostly of the very worst class of society, as destitute of clothing for the body, as of food and morals, are now 'clothed and in their right minds.'

"The establishment is formed, the principle has been proved to be good to answer my purpose, and only requires extension to make it both cheap and efficacious in relieving the wants and improving the condition of the poor. My humble endeavours in the cause of the unhappy children have lately been noticed and warmly supported by a numerous and most respectable body of tradesmen, and I have every reason to

think, that my plans of employing them in agricultural labour will shortly be adopted as a parochial measure, and by a more agreeable, as well as a more profitable means of subsistence, gradually diminish the poor-rates, remove the workhouses from the metropolis, decrease the number of offences, and render the poor the instruments of their own happiness. The capital which is now locked up will be used with quadrupled profit and advantage in the cultivating and improving the face of the country. *Two hundred millions*, which furnish at *four* per cent. eight millions of poor rates, making the miserable more wretched, will be spread out, and cover the empire with abundance; and the rise in the price of land and labour, simultaneously with a treble demand for and a reduction in the price of food and clothing, will furnish a practical demonstration of the great truths that man is intended to be the best friend, and not the enemy, of his neighbour; 'that in the multitude of the people is the king's honour;' that every human being capable of labour can maintain himself; and, in spite of all that the check-population philosopher may say to the contrary, that there is not a man too many in the country. Christmas approaches,

the season of cheerfulness to some; to others (and, alas! to how many) of want, of sorrow, and of misery. Two years ago, a few benevolent ladies, by a penny subscription, raised *one thousand five hundred pounds*. What blessings would such a sum enable us to confer on hundreds of houseless and friendless boys, the sons of men who have fought and bled for their country.

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“Dec. 6, 1832.”

The above letter contains an appeal, which, we think, could scarcely be resisted by such as have paid any serious attention to the state of our suffering poor. With regard to adults in distress, it is feared, in many instances, that their misery is the result of crime; and some apprehension may be justly entertained as to the efficacy of the relief we may feel disposed to bestow. That it may be thrown away upon a worthless object, is too probable; but a suffering child must be viewed in a very different light. Here an evident case of unavoidable wretchedness presents itself, attributable only to the class of society in which it had the misfortune to be born. Every effort to relieve such an object,

and to rescue it from its degradation, is a positive duty, for the neglect of which no subterfuge can be found. This relief is not to be effected by giving money, which, in all probability, would only tend to pamper the parent in vice, and to accelerate the ruin of the child; but by such effectual means as are here proposed, by which we may not only save a fellow creature from destruction, but a fellow-subject to our country—not only a human being from misery and death, but a fellow-mortal from everlasting destruction. The calculations may be vague, and the amount of benefit exaggerated, but much positive good must ensue, and the divine blessing obtained on the land when such efforts are made.

The following letter to the Editor of the “Morning Herald,” dated the 19th of August, 1833, when receiving the intelligence of the arrival of the first division of the youthful emigrants at the Cape of Good Hope, shew how much the benevolent writer had the success of the great undertaking at heart; and had his wishes been responded to, at the very low rate of subscription for which he pleaded, how extensively would the blessing of the Children’s Friend Institution have been felt, not only at

home, but in our colonies. The acknowledgments he made to his warm and liberal friends, the Editors of the "Morning Herald," were justly due, and sincerely paid.

"MR. EDITOR,—The Society above-named owes much of its success to you, and I trust you will continue the kindness which has now enabled us to occupy some share of the public attention.

"The first division of our poor boys reached the Cape of Good Hope in the month of May. They were most welcomely received, and the whole of them immediately provided with good masters, who agreed to relieve us the expense of their voyage and outfit. The demand for them is likely to increase with the supply, so that there is no occasion for a child to go to prison, or commit a felony for the sake of finding food and lodging, and if good people, instead of giving their half-pence to beggars in the streets would give us 5s. a year—a little more than one penny per week, we would save them some pounds, besides emptying the prisons and leaving the work-houses for the reception of poor women and young helpless girls, who are too frequently driven to crime for want of a home.

“We have taken 212 boys out of the streets, and we will take as many thousands, if the public will support us. We ask only 5s. a year from each housekeeper, and we entreat those who have the means, to go and look at ‘The Brenton Asylum,’ at Hackney Wick. They will find forty poor boys who have exchanged idleness, crime, and poverty, for cheerfulness, labour, moral and religious instruction, and a comfortable home. Give us but the means, and every child in the empire shall be equally protected.

“I am told that the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy would be more encouraged if it were better known. What can we do more than appeal to the Press, and circulate our reports in every part of the metropolis, and even send them to the most distant parts of the empire? It is the intention of the Society to send out female children to the colonies as soon as we can find the means. The Cape of Good Hope has demanded 200 little girls between the ages of 10 and 12 years, and yet there are thousands even at that age daily coming to destruction in this great city.

“I am, Sir,

“Your most obliged and obedient servant,

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.”

The sentiments expressed in the letter which follows, will neither surprise nor offend the warmest advocate for the education of the poor, supported as they are by arguments shewing the indisputable necessity of giving to youth the means of employment, and every incentive to honest industry. The literary instruction given to the children at Hackney Wick, was confined to one part of the day, while the other was devoted to the field and garden. It was truly delightful to behold the cheerful countenances of the boys, whilst engaged either within or without doors; and we felt a conviction that this cheerfulness was sincere, as well as general, and could not be put on before the visitor. We could only wonder at the change a few weeks or a few days even had made in the habits and feelings of children, who had in all probability been involved from infancy in misery and degradation.

“To the Editor of the Morning Post.

“SIR—I return you many thanks for having inserted my last week’s letter in your valuable paper of Monday. The subject is one of vital importance, whether it be considered in a naval, military, or agricultural point of view. If we

want good sailors, or soldiers, or servants, or agricultural labourers, they must be trained for those employments, and they cannot be put in harness too young. The misfortune of our system is, that we teach reading and writing; but these accomplishments have in general only a mischievous tendency, inasmuch as they are not accompanied with any manual labour, and it is evident that, unless we can increase the quantity of food in the country by the application of labour, we shall, by giving instruction, only teach the poor to be still more discontented than they are.

“The Asylum established at Hackney Wick for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy keeps this principle steadily in view. We have there forty poor boys, who are taught their duty to God and their neighbour. Their habits of early depravity are generally overcome by kindness and constant employment, blended with rational amusement and religious instruction. The respectable people at Hackney Wick were alarmed when we first formed our establishment, lest we should bring among them a set of little ruffians, who would pillage their gardens; but they have since confessed that our boys are perfectly inoffensive,

and I believe when at church there is no set of children in better order. When we consider what these children have been, this is a very surprising change, and yet we have no other punishment than occasional privation of animal food, and sometimes a few hours of solitary confinement.

“The village boys at first insulted them, and called them ‘slaves,’ and ‘white negroes,’ because they worked in the field, but our little fellows very soon convinced them that neither their moral or physical powers were impaired by their new mode of life; since that the village harmony has been undisturbed. We have no fear of the boys wanting employment; only let the Press support us, and we will very soon clear out the prisons and leave the workhouses for poor women and children.

“If you and your benevolent brother editors will only favour me with a small corner once a week in your journals, I will save your pockets from being picked, reduce your poor’s rates, and, I hope, put a few gin-shops out of commission.

“I remain, Sir,

“With great respect, your obedient servant,

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“August 16, 1833.”

In the following appeal to the Press for a continuance of its truly liberal and valuable assistance, there are some very remarkable and striking suggestions—but they will speak for themselves, and have their due share of influence upon the public mind. Much indeed is to be done, by means apparently insignificant. Unity of purpose, with the smallest pecuniary sacrifice in proportion to the means of the giver, will do great things; and if every person who really feels an interest in the poor destitute child, will but bring over *one* more to think and feel and to act as he does, the end will be attained far beyond the extensively benevolent views of the benevolent writer of this letter, sanguine even as he was.

“ To the Editor of the Times.

“ SIR—As the most open-hearted benevolence is the characteristic of all the respectable papers of the empire, I am sure that very little solicitation will be sufficient to induce you to insert in your widely-extended journal an appeal to the public in favour of the poor destitute boys, who are, to the number of many thousands, either starving in want, or thieving to gain a subsistence in the metropolis. It is vain to say that these

poor children may be maintained in the work-house; if they are able or willing to enter such an asylum, they leave it worse in morals than they entered, or go from thence to the house of correction—to worse associates—to harsh treatment—to hopeless ruin. The new system on which the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy has acted with so much success, is one of kindness and conciliation—labour, blended with rational amusement, and moral and religious instruction. By these means we do flatter ourselves that we have already reclaimed some boys, whose inveterate bad habits had set at defiance any species of prison discipline and severity. The true use of learning is, to acquire and to spread knowledge for the good of those who cannot obtain it by other means—to teach a poor creature how to live honestly in this world, and to fit himself for the next. For this purpose, the Press is the great machine, the choicest gift of heaven to benighted man; without this, we should still be involved in the darkness and barbarity of the middle ages; and although in too many instances a bad use is made of this powerful weapon, it is the duty of the honest and well disposed to counteract that evil by disseminating

the best principles—by inculcating habits of temperance, order, obedience to the laws, cleanliness, and industry. Has not immense progress been made already in these great objects? Will any man pretend to deny it? If he does, and if he denies the credit of our improvements to the freedom of the Press, he may as well assert that the kingdom of Ashantee is as free and as happy as Great Britain. If we have improved in the science of government since the days of the curfew, of the crusades, of Henry VIII., or of Charles I., has it not been owing, under Divine Providence, to the liberty of the Press? To you, then, the conductors of this inestimable gift, I address myself, as the friend of the most friendless creatures in this great empire—I mean the thousands of poor children without home or parents, or who would be better without them, seeing that the first is the abode of disease and misery, the last their tutors and instructors in vice. For the poor females, I have at present no plan for immediate relief, except that of sending them by hundreds to our colonies, where they are wanted, and where they are willing to go; but for the boys I have a place prepared, where, to the number of 200, they may be fed, clothed, and so in-

structed in agricultural labour, as to enable them to earn an honest livelihood, either at home or abroad. Many years ago, I learned from a riding master that a horse could never be trained by violence. From that moment I applied the moral lesson to man. 'If,' said I, 'I can gain his esteem by kindness, I shall be sure to make him obey me by the motives of love and gratitude.' The experiment has been tried, and has succeeded beyond our most sanguine expectations. Away, then, with the awful and demoralizing system of hanging, flogging, and shooting; these plans 'have been weighed in the balance and found wanting.' Capital punishments must, no doubt, occasionally be resorted to; but if we mean to avoid the necessity of using them, we must watch betimes over the morals of the rising generation. If we wish Britons to be mild, obedient, firm, brave, and humane, we must begin by setting them such examples in early life as will ensure their continuance in the path of virtue. This, sir, is the synopsis of our plan, as far as regards the juvenile vagrants. There are, it is believed, full 15,000 of them in the metropolis, trained to every vice. Our laws and our police think only of the punishment of them when con-

victed, never once dreaming that at a less expense they might be rendered happy, and faithful to their king and country, useful to themselves, and to society. On a moderate calculation, I believe some millions of people are about to expend, on an average, three shillings each in the consumption of oil and tallow to celebrate the passing of the Reform Bill: a large sum, which, if properly applied by the Labourers' Friend Society, the Temperance Society, and the Juvenile Vagrant Society (not to name others equally meritorious), would be sufficient to relieve all the most prominent cases of distress in the country. This is the way I would celebrate the Reform. The poor should reap the benefit of it in the first instance; the rich would have their portion of it in the additional security afforded to their property by the diminution of crimes, of punishment, and of poor rates: drunkenness, and beggary (its inseparable companion), would disappear from our streets. But I am going too far; to do good, we must not attempt too much at one time: all I have, therefore, to beg of you at present is, to print this letter in your journal. We ask a regular contribution of only 5s. a year from all respectable housekeepers: places for

payment will very shortly be appointed in different parts of the town. In the mean time, I have only to say, that 30 poor boys, who have mostly been abandoned characters, are now earning their bread with cheerfulness, at West Ham, in Essex, under the care of our officers. Our committee meets on Wednesdays, at half-past two, No. 32, Sackville-street, Piccadilly, and I shall be happy to afford any information.

“I am, Sir,

“Your obliged and obedient servant,

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“Sept. 1833.”

We are convinced, that no arguments are necessary to recommend the annexed statement—it carries conviction at once to every one who will give himself the trouble to contemplate the situation, the sufferings, and the prospects of the youthful poor in our large cities and manufacturing towns. If the plan here recommended be steadily persevered in, without our being discouraged at instances of abuse, which must be expected to occur sometimes, especially in countries which have but recently shaken off the degrading and villifying system of slavery, but which a vigilant government and wholesome

laws are fully equal to provide against. All that has hitherto been wanting is time, by which the fair and salutary working of a plan may be shewn—a plan so evidently founded upon the purest and holiest motives.

“ *To the Editor of the Morning Herald.*

“SIR,—As you have so kindly noticed in your paper of this day, the embarkation of the poor boys on board the Bolton, for Algoa Bay, you will add to the great obligations we are under to you, as a public writer, if you will insert a few observations connected with this subject. I am unfriendly to adult emigration, as a remedy for what is termed ‘superabundant population;’ but the removal, or, I might say, the *transplanting* of young people to a more open and less occupied field, is as necessary in human society as it is in the vegetable kingdom, and the effect is as beneficial in one case as in the other. If I can find children naked and hungry, in a filthy cellar, or a dreary garret, where their labour will not procure them the common necessities of life, and by removing them to the Cape of Good Hope, not only prevent their becoming thieves, and, consequently, an expense to the country, but also

absolutely serviceable to it, I think I shall have made out a case sufficient to justify further exertions.

“The Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy has already sent out to the Cape of Good Hope 95 boys, who, it may be said, have been thus not only rescued from destruction, but rendered useful to a valuable colony. The supply is to be constantly kept up, and in no case to be allowed to exceed the demand. Fifty-five embarked on Wednesday, making the total number, since February last, one hundred and fifty. We have received from our corresponding Committees at the Cape the most flattering letters of approval, and there is every reason to believe that these poor defenceless creatures will become creditable members of society. The cost of their voyage, outfit, &c., will, in all probability, be thankfully repaid by their employers in the first instance, and ultimately deducted from the wages of the apprentice: so that a child is put forward in life, and respectably established, by an advance made to him on his own capital—*i. e.* his labour—the society taking the risk of death or defalcation; and this loss, if any, falls so light on the community at home, as to amount to nothing;

while the benefit conferred by the diminution of crime, and the increased security of property, will be universally felt and acknowledged.

“But the good does not end here: by the early removal of juvenile paupers to a place of profitable labour, the certain decrease of adult paupers with young families must follow, and, consequently, as certain a reduction in the poor rates. This the parishes are now beginning to feel and to see. We have, therefore, only to beg your continued good offices, as the Editor of a very popular Journal, to make us known, and to ask that humble contribution of only 5s. a year from every one who can afford it, to enable us to do extensive and incalculable good to our country.

“I have the honour to be, with real gratitude and respect, sir, your obedient servant,

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“Sept. 20, 1833.”

The amount of property pillaged from the public may here be overrated, and yet it must be of a very serious magnitude. We are not only to take into consideration the loss arising from actual robbery, but the still greater amount lost to the public by fraud and dishonesty, in the practices of the lower class of dealers. In this

case the poor are the principal sufferers, and exposed to extortion in every shape, from exorbitant retail prices, and damaged or inferior articles. Immense sums are also obtained, from all ranks of society, by the same means, and by the most ingenious false pretences; but we must add to this account, fearful as it is, another source of loss to the public—that which the depredator might have gained, had he been trained to industrious and honest habits.

“To the Editor of the Morning Post.

“SIR,—If it be our duty to provide for the happiness of our successors, and to endeavour at least to leave the world in a better state than we found it, there is no question of so much importance to the British empire and to the whole of civilized Europe as the better training of the children of the poor. It depends on us to say whether they shall be virtuous, happy, and industrious, or vicious, miserable, and profligate; whether our Colonies shall be supplied with a young, moral, and religious population; or whether the same young persons shall be educated in the practice of every crime, and, after having committed horrible offences and

swelled the calendars to an alarming extent, shall be sent out as felons to our valuable settlements, cursing the land that gave them birth, and the laws under which they have lived.

“Intimately acquainted as I am with the manners and habits of the poor, I will venture to say that no thief having attained the age of twenty-one years has purloined or destroyed property of less than £300 value; to which may also be added the expense of his repeated capture, detention, trial, and transportation, which may be classed under the head of building and repairing of prisons, payment of keepers, police officers, &c. That the system of coercion and punishment under which we have so long acted is unlikely to produce any kind of reformation or decrease of crime is, I think, clearly proved; and deeply do I deplore that the sums which were expended in the building of the Milbank Penitentiary were not laid out in the purchase of garden grounds and potato fields, wherein to have employed and instructed young persons in a business which would have rendered them useful to themselves and their country in any part of the world to which they might have thought proper to go. A well-regulated system

of agricultural education, adopted by all parishes (especially those of the metropolis), and in places as far remote as possible from gin or beer shops, offers, in my opinion, the safest and best mode of relieving the poor, and serving both the Parent State and the Colonies.

“As Honorary Secretary to the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy, I have lately received from the Cape of Good Hope two Newspapers, ‘The South African,’ and ‘The Graham’s Town Journal,’ by which I learn that our system has been so highly approved of as to cause public meetings to be held; at one of them, on the 16th of October last (Dr. Philips in the chair), it was resolved, ‘That our efforts were deserving of the approbation of every person both at home and abroad, as calculated to supply the Colonies with a description of *free* labourers of which they stand so much in need.’ Here there is at once an answer to the question which has so often and so triumphantly been cast in our teeth, ‘What will you do with the children when they are educated?’—(*I* never had any doubt as to what should be done with them *when* educated; my anxiety was, what to do with them when unedu-

cated.)—That question is now happily set at rest. The Cape of Good Hope, New Holland, Canada, Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, and even Newfoundland, will be glad to take more children, male or female, than we can send out to them, or than we can spare: properly trained, they are the riches of the country; but sent out as *we send the raw material*, they are a curse to the land they go to. The Cape of Good Hope is our half-way house and our key to India, a Colony of immense importance in every point of view; *that* should be the first supplied, and, though I am no friend to emigration, I would gladly see *ten thousand* boys properly prepared and sent out there, rather than see them starving and naked in our streets, or pining in Coldbath-fields and Newgate. The same number of young women, properly instructed in domestic management and economy, might gradually follow them; this would cut up vice by taking away the young shoots. The Bible and the spade for the boy; the Bible, broom, and needle, for the girl; the female must make clothes and cook, the male must bring in the money and the food.

“I hope, at the beginning of a new year, a generous public will not forget that frost and

snow is yet to come, that our Asylum at West Ham has only fifty boys, and that we reject hundreds of applications for want of funds. We ask but five shillings a year, and if we could obtain that from all householders, we should save them ten times the sum.

“I am, sir,

“Your most obedient servant,

“EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“Jan. 1, 1833.”

In the extract from “The Times” newspaper of 11th January, 1833, we find the following recommendation of the efforts making by Captain Brenton and his excellent friends, who had enrolled themselves in the cause of the unhappy juvenile vagrants, and we think it due to the editor, as well as to the Society, to give it a place here.

“In our last, we gave a brief account of the proceedings of the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy, in which it was agreed to send 20 boys to the Cape of Good Hope, to be employed in agriculture. Captain Brenton, the Honorary Secretary, has since published an Address, dated December 28, detailing the excellent plan which that gentleman has persevered

in, through a host of obstacles which few would have been found to contend with; which plan has at length been partially taken up by the government. On this, as on many other occasions, were prevention and foresight to take the place of punishment and delay, incalculable expense might be saved to the country; and, what is of tenfold more consequence, crowds of our youth who, from no original fault of their own, become criminals, might be rendered useful and valuable members of society, either abroad or at home. We take from Captain Brenton's last address to the public, the two following appalling but convincing statements:—‘At the Midsummer Sessions, at the Old Bailey,’ says the statement, ‘33 little boys, between ten and thirteen years of age, were sentenced to various terms of transportation. When their time (on board the hulks) is expired, they will be accomplished thieves, after having taken their degrees in the university of infamy, and will be ready for any desperate work which treason or rebellion may suggest; and thus the gangs of full grown villains are constantly recruited by the operation of the law, and thieves are educated at the expense of government, at a greater cost than it would take

to maintain an honest man.' The other remark is this:—'There are now confined in the prisons of the metropolis, between six and seven hundred children, and young persons, who might be made to earn their own living, instead of being kept at the public expense. The prisoners in Coldbath Fields, cost at the rate of £16 each per annum.' With such facts at these staring us in the face, is not that man a public benefactor of the highest class, who undertakes the mitigation of so great an evil? and are not his countrymen criminal in a high degree, who withhold the very scanty means by which only a few individuals might complete and consolidate so great a work? Renowned as this country is for its numberless public and private charities, it argues a sad want of discrimination, that one of so valuable a nature as that which Captain Brenton has been so zealously labouring to establish, should linger from want of funds. We trust, however, that the time is come when this public reproach will no longer exist, but that the sanction at length bestowed upon Captain Brenton's efforts by the Colonial Department, will open the eyes of the whole community to its importance; and that we shall no longer witness infancy handed over

to crime, which might, by other methods, be trained up to adult virtue and utility."

It is delightful to see the cause of humanity so liberally and so ably advocated by our most respectable daily papers. The Editors of the "Times," "Herald," and "Post," were at all times ready to devote their valuable columns to the furtherance of the efforts making by the indefatigable managers of the "Children's Friend Society."

Although the sanguine hopes and prospects which filled the heart of the truly philanthropic character, who is the subject of this work, and which dictated the letter we are now to insert, were not realized during his life, nor indeed can be fully realized to the present generation, we have the fullest confidence that if the blessing of God is duly and earnestly sought, they will be realized to our posterity, to a greater degree even than is here looked for. Prayer and perseverance will not be used in vain. The means proposed appear so self-evident, that we can hardly imagine an argument to be brought against them, at least the objections would equally apply to every one of the great and truly and essentially

glorious Institutions, which have risen up in this our favoured land—and what country possesses any thing like the number of them, in proportion to its population? To these, indeed, with the Divine Blessing upon them, we may attribute the unexampled prosperity and protection we have met with as a nation. We firmly believe that, if true and vital religion, religion manifesting itself in that only or effectual charity, the love of God, does exist in any part of the world, it is in our happy land. Here is abundant encouragement for the most strenuous exertions.

“To the Editor of the Morning Post.

“SIR—‘A friend in need is a friend indeed;’ and such have you and two or three of your worthy brother editors proved yourselves, in the cause of ‘the houseless child of want.’ You have at length opened the eyes of the public to the crying sin of infant imprisonment, the work-houses and the gaols, the cellars and the garrets. The convict hulks, and even the dry arches of Waterloo bridge, will no longer be tenanted by these poor little outcasts. Instead of a burden of increasing and intolerable weight, these hardy and gallant youths will become the support of

themselves and parents, the respectable inhabitants of our valuable colonies, the consumers of our manufactures, the producers of wealth. The demand for these young emigrants in our colonies, and particularly at the Cape of Good Hope, is indefinite, unbounded, and will increase with the supply, at least for some hundred years to come, while their outfit and conveyance give employment to shipping, and add activity to commerce. To train up and send out a poor boy to South Africa, costs our Society about £15; but we are contented to receive £12 from the colony, or £10 from the parishes, supplying the remainder out of the generous contributions of the public, given in such light proportions, as not to be felt; while, on the other hand, the benefit conferred on the empire, both at home and abroad, is incalculable, and will increase in a geometrical ratio. For as the youthful candidates for the workhouse are removed to profitable labour, the aged and incorrigible pauper will disappear; the price of labour will rise; but the public will gain by the decrease of the poor's rates, the diminution of crime, and the reduction of police expenses, prisons, and county rates. Instead of being transported as a felon, at the age of thirty, at the ex-

pense of £25, and after having plundered ten times that sum, the boy goes out a willing, cheerful, free, and happy labourer, taking with him the kindest and best spirit towards his country. His only capital is his labour, on which he receives an advance sufficient to set him forward in life; if he lives, he repays it; if he dies, the pecuniary loss is unfelt by society, and his place is supplied by another. When we took leave of the party, 55 in number, which we embarked on Wednesday, on board the Bolton, for Algoa Bay, I shall never forget the three hearty cheers they gave to the Committee, while tears of gratitude stood in their eyes. The little fellows had three suits of clothes each, with a good hammock, ready slung, and a good berth to hang it up in. Nothing had been neglected by the worthy captain and owners to render them comfortable. When I compare the present condition of these boys with that from which they had been rescued, and with that of the poor creatures now in our prisons, I am lost in amazement at the apathy with which human misery is viewed by many, and with the enormous sum it takes to train up a thief, to what it requires to make an honest man. Suffice it to say, that the money which

has been spent on the Milbank Penitentiary, would have provided for every destitute child, male or female, in the metropolis, for the last five years. The return in wealth, gratitude, and public happiness would have been incalculable. I have always maintained that the people are the riches of the land. I have proved it; and I defy all the check-population philosophers in the world to refute me.

"I could say much more on this inexhaustible subject, but neither your columns or the patience of your readers would admit of it. I, therefore, take my leave for a few weeks, but, in the mean time assure you, that I will never lose sight of the subject; and if the children of this civilized country are allowed to corrupt and rot in prisons and cellars, or beg their bread in our streets, it shall not be my fault.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

"Sept. 24, 1833."

We now lay before our readers some extracts from a pamphlet, published by Captain Brenton, in 1834; nor do we think we shall be censured for quoting largely from his "Observations on the

Training and Education of Children of Great Britain," arising, as they do, from the intense interest he felt in the welfare of his country, and especially in the prosperity of the younger and destitute branches of our population. They will also shew how earnestly desirous he was of promoting the comfort of our seamen, not only those in his own profession, but in the merchant service, looking forward, it may be feared, in the illusive, but, at all events, in the sanguine hope, that should his plans be received and matured, they might become instrumental to the final abolition of the cruel, though as yet unavoidable system of impressment. We admit that his view of the present state of our seamen may have been taken through a gloomy medium—that he saw them as they often present themselves on shore, with their reckless and profligate habits, but not as they were, and still are, on board of well disciplined ships, under prudent and judicious officers. It is too true that our seamen are notoriously addicted to drunkenness in general, although there are many exceptions to the rule; but what can be expected by such thoughtless, but brave, and generous creatures, on their return to our great sea-ports, after a long and laborious

voyage, when every blandishment, every species of seduction and temptation is diligently prepared for them. It was from the state in which he saw the seamen of our later days, since the peace, on the banks of the Thames, given up to vice and profligacy, that, despairing of the amendment of them, so deeply imbued in vice, he turned his attention to the rising generation, and sought, by educating and training the children of the poor, to render them a mine of wealth to their country, and to give them the means of resisting the temptations held out to them in every quarter, by a sound, religious, and moral education, by early instilling into them true Christian principles, and habits of temperance and industry—not employing the whole of their time in learning what they would be sure to forget, but by combining religious instruction with the employments by which they were to procure their living.

We can easily account for the dark shade which seemed to hang over the profession, in which he had taken such delight; and perhaps the cause may, in some great measure, be unavoidable. The distress of our seamen was the necessary consequence of the reduction of our navy

at the conclusion of the war, so many being thrown out of employment beyond what the merchants could receive in their vessels. The numbers wandering about the streets in winter—wretched, sick, and destitute—was a fearful sight, and aggravated by the utter impossibility, under existing circumstances, of affording them relief. Can we wonder then that a person who felt so deeply for the distress of a fellow-creature, and particularly of a fellow-seaman, should express himself in the terms of the following paragraph.

“I look at the labourers in our dock-yards, and find them all clad in a Government uniform, with an iron ring about their ancles; and if I observe this to the superintendent, he replies, that ‘they are the best men possible for the work, for that no others *can be depended upon*; and, moreover, if they were not convicts, *they would become chargeable to the parish*. I hasten away from this sickening sight, and go on board the Euryalus, convict hulk, in the Medway. There I find two hundred and twenty-five little boys, whose only crime was not having been trained to virtue. These poor helpless victims of mismanagement and extravagance are kept in iron cages, doing

the work of women, making shirts. I ask, if any of these children are likely to be reformed by this system; and I am told that none ever have been, and I infer that none ever will be. I find the stench intolerable—the hatchways much smaller than they were originally, and no wind-sails down. I go on shore from this miserable floating bastille, and I meet a large party assembled at the Sun Tavern, for the purpose of aiding and protecting unfortunate girls who are driven to ruin by want of work. I inform the assembly of what I had just seen on board the *Euryalus*, and I am answered by a shout of horror. One voice exclaimed, ‘They want to make Ferdinand the Sevenths of them.’ I am neither proud of my country nor its institutions, when I see such things; nor is there any good reason why they should exist a moment longer.

“I hope I am not a seditious nor a discontented person. I love the king and the government—no better government can be found among men—but all human institutions are susceptible of improvement: and as knowledge and science advance, the happiness of man must either keep pace with its improvements, or the whole fabric will burst asunder from its own weight.

“History, both ancient and modern, sacred and profane, abounds with facts illustrative of this proposition; and though the generality of mankind are apt to shut their eyes to the danger, it is the duty of every good citizen to be a watchman on the tower, and to warn his countrymen of its approach. That danger is now at your doors. Apathy, indolence, false economy, and real parsimony, together with the most unbridled extravagance, are sapping the very foundations of the empire.

“The first duty of the British government (any government) is to look to the character and circumstances of its working population, the basis of the social pyramid: if that is crumbling under our feet, what shall save the superstructure? What shall become of king, lords, and commons, when virtuous industry is succeeded by vice, crime, brutal violence, drunkenness? Such is the case at this moment—the plague is rapidly spreading—the Beer Act has nearly undone the country—the gin-shops are completing its ruin—our agricultural labourers are demoralized—our sailors are sots—the youth in our islands are not trained to labour, and the mental cultivation they receive only brings forth poisonous

fruit and bitter ashes. Look at your prisons in the metropolis—Coldbath Fields, Clerkenwell, Bridewell, Milbank Penitentiary—what reformation is produced in these colleges, when the devil is the head? I blame not the keepers of them—they do their duty—it is the system with which I quarrel. I blame not men, but the measures which have been ruinously and obstinately pursued for a series of years. In Clerkenwell, 1,200 prisoners cost us £20 a year each, or about £24,000 per annum; in the Milbank Penitentiary, 556 persons cost each £30, (a much larger sum is stated, but I wish not to exaggerate.) Warwick gaol costs about £19 for each boy annually; but I suspect that the whole outlay is not given in these calculations, as I have had reason to know has been the case in the metropolis. Yet, with all this, we find crime increasing. Whereas, did we but take the child in early life from the path of vice, and place him in the right road, we should save all the outlay of the prisons, hulks, the floggings, hangings, and transportations, the tears of mothers, the despair of fathers, the disgrace of the country, the growing infamy of the people, and the dissolution of society.

“It would be a waste of the reader’s time and patience to describe all the numerous instances of moral depravity emanating from the work-house and the prison. The neglect of the youthful poor by their parents, their guardians, and their superiors, the facility with which they can acquire money by begging, and the difficulty they experience in obtaining it by honest labour, unhappily combine to produce that catalogue of crime which we so much deplore, and prove the soundness of my often repeated axiom, that the felons of 1834, are the neglected children of 1814. Thus even-handed justice treads quickly on the heels of our guilty omission. The cost of our police, the spread of crime, the increase of drunkenness, the numerous burglaries, the midnight conflagration, the loss of our ships by fire and wreck, the desertions in war, and the piracies in peace, the squalid poverty and emaciated frames of so many of our sailors, the increase of county rates and poor’s rates, and the disabled state of society confirm the dreadful tale.

“But the spirit of enquiry is now awake, and mankind may now no longer be governed by violence, but by reason—by kind and gentle means. The schoolmaster is abroad, but he has burnt his

rod, or he will burn it, when he discovers the efficacy of the milder mode: the boy whose spirit rebelled at coercive measures, whose manly front bid defiance to torture, wept like an infant, when addressed in the gentle accents of affectionate admonition and soothing kindness.

“Let the children at the school at Hackney Wick speak for themselves: let them be compared to an equal number selected from any workhouse, or from any metropolitan district. The Guardians of St. Marylebone may, I think, be fearlessly appealed to: their opposition has yielded to facts, and the triumphant appearance of the little happy boys, who had been absent three months from their workhouse, and trained in our country school, convinced them that their Committee had made a just report, and that the workhouse was not the place to train and educate a child, whose birthright is liberty, whose duty is obedience to the laws.

“How often have I been told that I was visionary, flowery, Utopian—that I thought too well of mankind—that I never could govern without a rod, or a cat-o’-nine-tails. I own I once thought so too, but a trial of many years, has convinced me that I was wrong. We may

be led, not driven; and though in the present state of mankind the power of punishment *must* still be confided to the captains of ships, I feel quite confident the recourse to it will be gradually less and less frequent, until at last the instrument called a 'cat' will be shewn as an antique curiosity, like the thumb screws in the Tower, which were intended by the Spaniards for the conversion of our ancestors to the Catholic faith.

"The girls' school, at Chiswick, called, by the express permission of their Royal Highnesses the Duchess of Kent and her illustrious Daughter, 'The Victoria Asylum,' is the female branch of the Children's Friend Society, conducted exactly on the same principle as that for the boys, and is, if possible, still more deserving of public notice and support, inasmuch as the sex is more defenceless, and more dependent on our exertions.

"The Committee of Management is composed of some of the most distinguished females in the country, both for rank and virtue; and it may fairly be presumed that such an institution will be a favourite with the public, and that the establishment of this and similar ones will shortly

supersede the pernicious system of workhouse education, even for children of the youngest class, or, at least, such as are just out of the nursery. These poor helpless little innocents will be tended and taken care of by the elder girls, who will thus learn how to nurse and administer to the wants of children, making that a part of their education. This may appear trivial to some—to me, and to those with whom I have the happiness to act, a good mother appears to be of the very first importance in rearing a good man: bad men *may* have good children, but rarely indeed do bad mothers train up a virtuous offspring.

“The colony to which the little girls are sent, as soon as they are qualified to do the work required of them, has been chiefly the Cape of Good Hope, where female servants are much wanted, and where the demand for males still exceeds our power to supply.

“The accounts which we have received of the children after their arrival, and when they had been provided with good masters and mistresses, are most satisfactory, as upwards of one hundred and thirty of their letters will prove. It behoves the Committee at home to receive them as early

as possible into the asylums; first, to prevent the contamination of vice with which they are threatened in the workhouse or prison; and secondly, to send them at an early age to the colony intended for their residence, in order that they may the better adapt themselves to their new country, while they cherish an affectionate and filial remembrance of the kindness shewn to them in their parent state.

“All our correspondents abroad concur in asking for the children between the ages of ten and twelve; and we the more readily agree with them, inasmuch as we have invariably found that under the age of twelve or thirteen they are tractable and easily taught, while above that age they have too frequently caused trouble, expence, and embarrassment. This experience confirms the truth of the motto with which I have headed this little book. So far all is very well for a demonstration; it has been satisfactorily proved that a child may be trained to virtue and happiness for one-tenth part of the expense which it usually takes to bring it up to destruction.

“The teaching of a poor child to read and write is nothing compared to what we aspire to. Knowledge, however great, is not good, unless it

is placed in good hands. I have heard of little boys going into the woods, in Westphalia, and making gunpowder; and the knowledge acquired in many of our schools may be applied to no better purpose. But whose fault is it? Surely of those who, having the power to direct, give a wrong impulse, leave the momentum inert, or allow it to take a false direction; the ship is either run on shore by unskilful officers, or is drawn by the currents among rocks and shoals, because no one was found qualified to take the helm.

“The ‘Children’s Friend Society’ having thus, in the course of seven years, with the blessing of divine providence, rescued upwards of thirteen hundred children from ruin, and rendered that labour profitable to the state which before was used to its double injury, both by the loss or destruction of property, as well as by the force employed for its protection; we confidently appeal to the good sense and humanity of the nation for support. We ask for a comparison between the relative merits of our school, and the workhouses, the prisons, the penitentiaries, the hulks, the mad-houses, and the penal colonies—for all these owe their being to the neglect of the education of the youth of this mighty em-

pire. Our plans have long since discarded the names of 'experiments,' or 'theories,' or 'Utopian visions,' or 'flowery speculations;' they amount to real, solid demonstrations; and if we desire to have a better class of men in our armies or our fleets, if we wish for better domestic servants of both sexes, let us train them to be sober, virtuous, religious, and industrious, to fear God and to fear disgrace, but nothing else."

Such are the admirable, truly benevolent, and patriotic reflections made by the founder of the "Children's Friend Society," after it had been in operation seven years, to which every friend to the suffering poor or to his country must respond; and when to these we add the following paragraph, the appeal to public notice and to public assistance appears to be irresistible. He goes on to say:

"And shall we stop short in our work before it be complete. Let the reader, however exalted he may be in life, read the following pages,* addressed more particularly to the humblest children of the empire. He will see that our object is only begun, its operation is only in its infancy. I have passed half a century in my profession.

* See "Bible and Spade," p. 38.

I have witnessed the execution of my fellow-creatures with a sigh, and a vow to heaven, that if ever I had the power I would endeavour to apply a remedy to the evils produced on man by his own ignorance and depravity. If we desire that hanging, and flogging, and crime, and drunkenness, and impressment should cease, let us train up our soldiers and our sailors in the habits of religion, temperance, self-denial, and a love of their country."

This was no unmeaning declamation, uttered with a view of gaining applause, or courting popularity. These were the sentiments he uttered, and the feelings he was continually expressing; and well did he redeem the pledge here given. The fourteen years of his life, between the period of his retiring from active service and his death, were entirely dedicated, in the most indefatigable exertions, to promote the welfare of his fellow-creatures; and even during that period devoted to writing his "Naval History," where his motive was equally patriotic, his relaxation from the labour of the one, was employment in the cause of the other.

He proceeds to quote a passage from the work of Mr. James Simpson, of Edinburgh, upon the

subject of popular education, which gives great strength to the arguments in favour of the system pursued at the Children's Friend Society. It is as follows:

“But what is the nature of the education of the humbler classes which is extending in England, and has been so long established in Scotland? Is it of a kind to impart useful practical knowledge for resource in life? Does it communicate to the pupil any light on the important subject of his own nature and place in creation, on the condition of his physical welfare, and his intellectual and moral happiness? Does it, above all, make an attempt to regulate his passions, and to train and exercise his moral feelings, to prevent his prejudices, suspicions, envyings, self-conceit, vanity, impracticability, destructiveness, cruelty, sensuality? Alas, no! it teaches him to read, write, and cipher, and to pick up all the rest as he may.* We hope to be excused for quoting largely from Captain Brenton's unpretending little book, “The Bible and Spade,” on the rise and progress of the Children's Friend Society, shewing its tendency to prevent crime and poverty, and eventually to dispense with capital punishment and impressment.

* Simpson's “Popular Education,” p. 32.

“At page 40, he says, “It seems indeed but too obvious that the real secret of education has hitherto been but little understood, and still less practised. Oberlin de Fellenberg and the amiable Count Vender Reche, of Dusselthal Abbey, have led the way, and some few attempts have been made to follow them. Little, however, has yet been done in this country, and still less in Ireland, where it is much wanted. Our national schools are in this respect alarmingly defective.”

“We have visited the Institution of the Children’s Friend Society, at Hackney Wick, and, from what we saw, can readily subscribe to the remarks made in the next paragraph, p. 41. “How much may be done by gently training a child to labour and knowledge, those only know who have made the experiment, and devoted their minds to the subject. Six weeks have made the most surprising change in the worst disposed boys; and the comparison between those who have been only for that period under our tuition, and those who have been on the streets or work-houses, is truly wonderful. We use no cat-o’-nine-tails or stick, a blow is never struck, angry words scarcely ever exchanged; very rarely that even solitary confinement for three hours had recourse

to; a lie is seldom known, there being no inducement to depart from truth. Instances, no doubt, will occur where, for a time, the efforts of our masters seem to be thrown away. A child occasionally deserts, but rarely returns to his former habits. We had a remarkable instance of this at Hackney Wick. Three boys deserted in the school uniform: they were captured by the police, and brought before the magistrate, who, on hearing the case from me, was very angry with the boys, two of them having been received from the House of Correction but a few days before; he sentenced them to the prison again for fourteen days, and to be well whipt. The little fellows cried bitterly, and implored mercy, which, on my interceding for them, was granted. They went back overjoyed to the school, and became the pride of it afterwards. Had they gone to the House of Correction, it is probable they would have become confirmed felons. It is therefore our object and principal plan to abolish corporal punishment, not by law, but by disuse, and to substitute shame, for where this is wanting, torture is useless.” ” ”

The justness of this last pithy observation is very obvious, and will apply equally to cases

where discipline is required. It would undoubtedly be dangerous in the extreme to abolish punishment by law, either in the army or navy, but especially in the latter, where the lives of a whole ship's company might be endangered by the misconduct of an individual; but we believe that the measures adopted for the gradual abolition of the practice, without the enactment of a positive prohibition, is doing all that can be safely attempted—nay, we may say, all that can be wished; for it is inflicted now under such regulations and restrictions, as to be visited only upon the worst characters, who would equally come under punishment if on shore, by the sentence of the civil power.

To the following paragraph we can give our hearty assent, having seen the efficacy of such a system most triumphantly proved, with the exception of the training ship, none having yet been established.

“If a boy was initiated into the Navy under such a feeling; if he were kindly trained, and instructed, and taught to look up to his captain and his officers as friends and advisers, and his shipmates as brothers and companions; if he knew that upon his return home to England a

hearty welcome awaited him on board a training ship, where he might safely deposit his chest and bedding, while he went to visit his parents, he would naturally acquire a love of his country, which no time would obliterate; and in the hour of danger he would fly to her defence with as much ardour as a mother would defend the infant in her arms. Our practical experience is confirmed by many naval officers of distinction, who assert that their ships were invariably in the worst order where the most punishments were inflicted."

In his indefatigable efforts to establish the Children's Friend Society, and to increase the benefits he expected from such an institution, Captain Brenton looked far beyond human means for the attainment of his object. I have already adverted to the diary for the last three years of his life. In it are numerous prayers shewing the fervour with which he implored the divine blessing upon the undertaking. I select a few of these records of humble and pious feeling, convinced the reader will receive them with indulgence. They are, indeed, indispensable towards giving a fair view of the character of the subject of our memoir. The selection is not

easy, for the subject appears to have been continually on his mind; the object of almost every prayer, especially of those written on the Sabbath, on which day he usually took a retrospective view of the past week, offering up his thanksgivings for success obtained, and prayers for continued assistance. But it was not only for the furtherance of this benevolent design for the relief of the youthful poor, that his devout petitions were offered up—an appeal was habitually made to the same divine power under every circumstance of importance, either to himself or others—but that which seemed most to occupy his mind was the uncertainty of life, a convincing proof that he had long felt the increase of that disease of the heart by which his was terminated.

In the full conviction that every Christian reader will respond to the prayers offered up by the promoter of the Children's Friend Society, we will offer no excuse for laying some of them before the public. These secretly recorded feelings of his heart will, no doubt, convince even the most sceptical of those who questioned the usefulness of the institution, that it was not lightly taken up by its benevolent founder; that

its success and prosperity was the constant subject of his prayers and thoughts; that, under all the difficulties he experienced, and the opposition he met with, his appeal was to Him "to whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid." An undertaking, began and perseveringly carried on in such a spirit, cannot be otherwise than ultimately successful and flourishing. It may be, that for wise purposes the opponents to such a cause have been permitted to prevail; but of this we may be sure, that the seed sown will not all perish—some "will spring up, and blossom, and bear fruit abundantly." "The bread has been cast upon the waters, and will be found after many days." To the promoter of this most benevolent attempt to improve the situation of the lower classes of society, and to save them from destruction, will doubtless be applied the precious words, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

In offering the reader some brief extracts from the diary kept by my brother in the last three years of his life, I shall endeavour to make the selection as limited as possible, consistent with the object I have in view—that of giving a just delineation of his character.

He delighted to record his recollection, and his gratitude for past mercies, in which he clearly felt and saw the hand of a divine, watchful, and benign Providence. His earnest supplications for the success and prosperity of the schools established for the youthful poor, and his prayers for the temporal and eternal happiness of the poor destitute children, form a very prominent part in his devotions. A continual expectation of a sudden removal from this world, and a preparation for it, had long been habitual to him, and led him to cultivate a cheerful resignation to the will of God, as well as a dependence upon the divine blessing for the furtherance of his undertakings. His solicitude for the welfare of his relatives and friends, and particularly for the religious progress of the younger branches, is a very frequent subject of his prayers. These humble and fervent petitions will doubtless be effectually heard and answered far beyond the most sanguine hopes of him who uttered them. I have been induced to make more copious extracts than I intended, but felt that I could not be more brief without doing injustice to the subject I had ventured upon. I have selected them from nearly 1100 memoranda, which I have

found amongst his papers—confining myself to such as appeared best adapted to shew how, under the various circumstances of life, he was led to the expression of gratitude and love, of trust and confidence, or of cheerful submission to the dispensations of Divine Providence.

On the 10th of January, 1836, he was evidently thinking that his time of departure might be near at hand, and he writes:

“Jan. 10.—Almighty and eternal Lord God, behold I am in thy hands, to do with me as seemeth best in thy sight. Have mercy on me, and grant that in all my troubles and afflictions I may place my whole trust and confidence in thee. Grant me to be ever ready to depart, having, by thy grace, a pure heart and a right spirit; so that, whenever it may please thee to take me, it shall not be said that I was suddenly called away. And this I beg through Jesus Christ.”

“Jan. 24.—Most merciful and ever-living Lord God, grant me the gift of wisdom and strength to perform thy will; grant me to be every day prepared to quit this world, and to be received into thine everlasting kingdom. Extend this

blessing, O Lord, to all that are dear to me, and to all the children of our schools. Grant this, O Lord, for the sake," &c.

The next extracts will shew the habitual contentment and gratitude of his heart for all the blessings and mercies showered down upon him, and his entire exemption from these ambitious and selfish feelings by which so large a portion of mankind are induced to overlook the blessings provided for them, in contemplating the superior advantages, if they may be called so, of those in the scale of society placed above them. We believe that he was more than usually exempt from these worldly feelings; that his whole heart and soul were engaged in promoting the best interests of others, and especially of the friendless and the destitute. He had, at the same time, the prosperity of his country ever upon his mind, and was constantly occupied in devising the means of bringing good out of evil; and by rescuing the youthful classes from degradation and vice, to render them eminently useful to the state. We have in our possession many quires, we might almost say reams, of paper, written upon this subject, in unconnected pieces, some of which will be inserted in this work, and tend to prove

how much time and energy the writer of them devoted to the subject.

“ March 27, 1836.—One of the most lovely days I ever beheld, and I and mine in perfect health to enjoy it. Eternal, grateful praises be to thy holy name, O Thou from whom all blessings flow! Grant me to feel every day a deeper sense of what I owe to thee. Behold thou hast freely given me more than I could deserve or desire of this world's goods. Lord, increase not my worldly goods, but for the relief of others; and rather diminish my temporal and bodily wants, that I may have more to spare for the pressing wants of others. Grant to me and all mine, O Lord, an abundant supply of thy Holy Spirit, that we may see and know thee, and thy wondrous works, with an enlarged heart and a clearer understanding. Have mercy on all our poor children, and be with them in the distant parts of the earth—through”——

“ April 17.—I feel quite sure that my heart is not in a right state; that, although I try to conceal it from myself, I think more of this world's comforts than I do of a future state. I feel that my faith is weak and wavering, although at times it appears to burn with ardour. My

spirits are too much depressed with disappointment; and this could not happen but that my mind was bent on some worldly object. Since, then, I knew my disease, I may also find a cure. That can only be obtained by prayer. Merciful and eternal Searcher of all hearts, cleanse the thoughts of mine, and renew a right spirit within me. Keep me from impure, unholy, and covetous desires, and grant me ever to have thee before my eyes. Extend thy blessing to all whom I love: to our poor children, and to all who surround me in this world: finally, to all people: for great is thy power. This I beg"——

“ May 1.—Almighty and ever-living God, the more I reflect on thy power, thy mercy, and thy goodness, and thy wondrous works, the more I am lost in wonder and amazement that thou shouldest care for such insignificant beings as we are; but thou hast made us, in mercy, to become the inhabitants of a better world. This is our hope, our stay, our refuge in the storm. Keep fast in us, O Lord, this anchor of the soul. Keep us ever active and watchful in the performance of our duty. Shed thy continued blessings on our schools, plant thy word in the hearts of our children, and let it bring forth fruit

abundantly, to the honour and praise of thy holy name—through,” &c.

“June 17.—May the Almighty please to accept of our humble services to his praise and glory. We can never sufficiently praise and thank him for all his mercies. I will still trust in Him, and not be afraid. He will provide for all our wants. I was once a little boy without a shilling which I could call my own; and now I have a sufficiency, not only for my own wants, but something to spare for the wants of others. This is the Lord’s doing, and I fear I do not give away as much as I should do out of my little store. Lord, expand my heart, and make me to see that the more I give to my needy brethren, the more blessings thou dost pour down on me and mine. Grant me thy Holy Spirit to know and do thy will, and keep me and all I love in the paths of peace and virtue, through Jesus Christ. Amen.”

In a fit of gout.

“July 10, 1836.—O God, how merciful art thou to me: grant me thy grace to improve my time while it is yet day. Behold, I know not how soon I must appear before my Lord and Maker, and my Redeemer. O how *shall* I ap-

pear. Wash me from all my sins, cleanse me from all my unrighteousness, and grant that I may be prepared at any moment of my life to appear before thee. Grant the same to all whom I love, to all our poor children, and especially to those to whom thou knowest, Lord, I am bound to with the strongest ties of affection."

"July 20, 1836.—Almighty and everlasting God, I return thee most humble and hearty thanks for thy great mercy in that thou hast conducted me safely to the beginning of the 63rd year of my life. Grant, Lord, that I may grow in grace, and in love to thee. Give me wisdom and understanding that I may serve thee—through," &c.

"August 14, 1836.—Lord, of thine infinite mercy keep me in the right way. Guide all my steps. Let me be thy humble instrument in doing good to my fellow creatures. I thank thee most humbly that the name of our society has at length attracted the notice of our government.* By thy bounty it will increase, and bring forth fruits. O Lord, let it not perish for want of nourishment, but shed thy blessing upon this vine that thou hast planted, and grant thy Holy Spirit to thy people, through"—

* See debate in Lords.—12th August.

A detachment of children having been embarked for Canada, he offers up the following prayer that the divine blessing may attend them; a prayer which was doubtless heard, and will be effectually granted, to the present and eternal welfare of many of those youthful individuals.

“Aug. 21.—Almighty and most merciful God, Protector of all who trust in thee, receive our prayers for the good of our poor little children, twenty of whom we have this day sent off to Canada. Be thou with them, O Eternal Father; guide them with thy Holy Spirit, for Jesus Christ’s sake. Bless them in their voyage across the ocean, and in their more perilous voyage through life, until they reach thy blessed haven of eternity. Guard and protect them; keep them in the love of thee, and give them as much of worldly goods as will keep them out of the snares of temptation, and this I beg”—

“Aug. 28, 1836.—O thou who governest all things in heaven and in earth, guide and direct me in the right way. Grant me to ask only such things as shall be pleasing to thee; give me wisdom, and purity of thought; grant me to know thy will and to do it: pour thy Holy Spirit abundantly into our hearts; guide all our poor

orphan children, so that in the desert they may find the well of water, and know that thou art present with them every where. Be thou with our young emigrants when they cross the deep, and protect them alike from the storm, and from the snares of the devil. O let thy merciful ears be open to our cry, and grant us thy peace this day and for ever."

"Oct. 2, 1836.—Stir. up, Almighty God, I humbly beseech thee, the hearts of our rulers to the protection and training of these poor children; let them not be lost for want of our care; let thy Holy Spirit be with us all, and grant that we may be the means of finishing this great work of moral and religious reform, that the poor may know thee, and that thy holy name may be never pronounced among them but with due reverence in devout prayer. Let thy blessing be upon our land, so that we may be a refuge to the oppressed, and grant that true religion, justice, peace, and every virtue may flourish among us, through," &c.

After a very stormy week.

"Almighty and most merciful God, it is only of thy great goodness that we are not all destroyed: we are a sinful people; and behold thou hast, in the last week, sent thy storms and tem-

pests to warn us to flee from the wrath to come. How terrible art thou, O God, when thou comest forth in anger to judge the rebellious! O grant us thy grace and Holy Spirit, that we may serve and please thee better; dwell in our hearts, and keep them pure and holy. Keep all our dear children in the fear and dread of thee, and the love of thy Son and Saviour Jesus Christ."

On the departure of his nephew (recently married) to the Continent, he writes thus: "Most gracious, powerful, and merciful Lord God, who hast shown to thy unworthy servant so many, such great mercies, be pleased to hear my prayer, which goeth not out of feigned lips. Bless, protect, and guide this young couple, wheresoever they go: be with them in all their doings: grant them a rich portion of thy Holy Spirit: sanctify them, and keep them in peace, and in the fear of thee; and whatsoever may be our destinies in this world, grant that we may all meet together, to part no more, in thy everlasting kingdom. Look with thy continued favour on my labours, and guide me in every thing which shall redound to thy honour and glory, and to the good of my fellow-creatures, through," &c.

Oct. 9, 1836, whilst confined to bed with a

severe illness, which had continued a week, he writes: "Almighty God, I am too unmindful of all thy mercies; I never do sufficiently praise thee for all thy mercies. I think only of this world and its enjoyments; and when, for a time, it pleaseth thee to suspend them, then I think that thou hast hidden thy face from me. O God, teach me to know thee better; teach me so to learn Christ, that in all tribulation my soul may magnify the Lord, and my spirit may rejoice in God my Saviour. Grant me grace to address thee from my bed of sickness, with fervour and sincerity of heart, through the same our," &c.

Convalescent.

"Oct. 16.—Almighty and everlasting God, with whom are all the issues of life and death, grant us to be so prepared, that when it shall please thee to summon me or mine, we may cheerfully say, 'Thy will be done.' Shed abroad thy saving grace into the hearts of all the dear children in our schools, and grant thy blessing to these in all parts of the globe whither thy good providence shall direct them: and this I beg"—

Recovery.

"Oct. 30.—Almighty and most merciful God,

pardon my coldness towards thee, and grant me vigour of body and mind to perform my duties of prayer and devotion, which, during my last illness, I have so dreadfully neglected. Deal not with me, O Lord, according to my deserts; but, according to thy great mercy, do thou bless and favour us. Do thou bless the poor and the sick with comforts to their bodies and their souls. Bless all our poor children with increase of grace. Sanctify us as a people; and grant, that in our worldly abundance, we may not forget thee, our God. Grant this," &c.

"Nov. 6, 1836.—Lord, how many, and great, and undeserved are thy mercies towards me. Do thou, O Lord, by thy quickening Spirit, make me more worthy of them. Give me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Give me wisdom and understanding, that I may know thy ways. Bless our poor children—those in the wilderness. Be thou their Guide. Grant them thy Holy Spirit, and teach them to know thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Bless my King and country, and keep peace on earth, through the same."

On the first day of the year 1837, we find this prayer for the children of the schools: "O God

of all power, be pleased to look down with an approving eye upon our humble endeavours to save these our poor children. Bless them, O most merciful Father, with increase of grace, and guide their footsteps in the paths of peace and righteousness. Be with them when they cross the ocean, and when they wander in the desert. Keep them from bodily harm, and from spiritual evil. Let their thoughts be fixed on thee and thy dear Son. Let them be a comfort to their friends and to their neighbours. Uphold their goings, that their footsteps slip not; and give them patience and courage under their afflictions, to thy honour and glory; and lead them to their everlasting rest. And this we beg"—

Dec. 10, having visited his brother-in-law at Greenwich, whom he found confined to bed, with scarcely a hope of recovery, he offers up the following prayer: "Almighty God, if we may humbly approach thy awful throne, to make known our wants and our desires, do thou grant us thy Holy Spirit, to ask only such things as may please thee. Thou knowest, O Lord God, our hearts desire that this our dear brother may be spared to us for a season. The best are never

sufficiently prepared to appear before thee, but we confide in thy long-tried mercy, that thou wilt dispose of us as seemeth best to thy godly wisdom. Not our will, but thine, be done. Only do thou send us thy Comforter, that we may have the consolation of knowing that thou art ever with us, and that not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without thy permission. Accept, we pray thee, our prayers, and our praises, and thanksgivings, through," &c.

Dec. 18, he writes: "At half-past eight, this morning, I received a letter from Greenwich, saying that our dear John died at eight o'clock last night, in perfect peace. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Most merciful and gracious Lord God, who shewest thy mercy in sending such afflictions as serve to awaken us to a sense of our present mortal and perishable state; we adore thy holy name, that thou hast been pleased to take our dear brother to thy holy and everlasting rest. We bless thee that he departed in full confidence in Jesus, the great Saviour of mankind. Lord, grant that we who now remain to deplore his loss, may have comfort and consolation from thy Holy Spirit, through the same"—

“March 26, 1837.—Almighty and everlasting Lord God, Creator and Governor of the Universe, thou great Judge of all our actions, and who also knowest our inmost thoughts; be pleased of thine infinite mercy and goodness to receive my humble and hearty thanks for thy great mercy and lovingkindness towards our schools and our poor children. O Thou Father of the fatherless, continue to watch over them, and grant me wisdom and thy Holy Spirit to remain firm in pursuit of doing good; and this I beg”——

In the month of May, in this year, all seemed so prosperous with the schools and the youthful emigrants, that his heart rose in joyful and grateful acknowledgments. He writes :

“May 6.—I feel daily more and more the efficacy of prayer. I feel quite confident that we owe all the success which has attended our schools to our constant appeal to the throne of grace. I will therefore never cease to praise and pray and give thanks; for while God is with us, who shall be against us? Almighty God, put into my heart good desires, pious, and holy, and religious thoughts, that I may be guided entirely by thy Holy Spirit in all things, and

finally be the instrument of salvation unto many; and this I beg," &c.

"May 28.—O God, how infinite is thy mercy towards me and mine. Surely thou art more to be praised and adored than our feeble powers can find words to express. Oh! fill us with light. Give us of thy Holy Spirit. Guide us in the right way. Teach us to be effectually useful to our poor brethren, and to be the means of bringing them, by hundreds and by thousands, to the kingdom of thy dear Son. Let thy merciful ears be open to our call. Grant success to my late appeal to the public. Let the history of the Children's Friend Society be spread over the land; and let vice, and crime, and poverty give way to virtue, and peace, and comfort; so that, in our prosperity, we forget not thee, our God, and thy Son Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

June 4, 1837.—In the memorandum for this day he writes: "Teach us, O Lord, to despise the pleasures of sense, and look only for the doing of thy will, for an happiness here and in eternity. Guard and protect us, and our dear dear friends and relatives, our King and country, and our poor children; protect them with

thy mighty arm ; raise them up friends in every quarter of the world ; be with them in the parched wilderness and the barren land, and grant them thy good Spirit, that they may become thy humble instruments of converting the desert into a garden of the Lord. Thy power can do this, O Lord ; for nothing is impossible with thee. O God, bless us with increase of food ; save thy people ; and keep us ever—through,” &c.

“July 16.—Gracious and eternal Lord God, be pleased to hear my humble prayer. Bless with thy favour our Queen: give her heavenly wisdom in abundance, and grant her wise and upright ministers, that by the justice of her measures, thy Holy Church may be established, and that we may live in peace and happiness under thy protection. Bless all our poor children with thy Holy Spirit: be with those who are in distant lands, and save them from all dangers both spiritual and temporal, and this I beg”—

Her most gracious Majesty having expressed herself favourable to the schools, the pious founder thus offers up his praises to the Source of all good.

“July 23.—Almighty Father, we behold

another instance of thy bounty towards our schools. Thou hast put it into the heart of our Queen to receive us, and to hear our petitions. May she become our protectress, and through thy grace, may she establish them in every part of her kingdom. Do thou be with us always, and let not thy face be turned from us. Be thou our constant Guide and Guard, and increase the number of our friends, through," &c.

It will be readily supposed that a mind so continually brooding over the sufferings of the juvenile poor would feel a deep interest in the discussions which about this time took place in parliament upon the subject of the children employed in the factories: we find accordingly in a memorandum written about this time the following pathetic prayer: "Almighty and everlasting God, behold we look up to thee for grace and protection. We implore thine aid against our spiritual enemies. Have mercy upon the poor children of this realm: soften the hearts of their cruel task-masters, and diminish their portion of labour. Continue thy blessings on our schools. Pour thy grace into the hearts of our children; bless them with a moderate portion of worldly goods, that they may not be poor, and

steal; let them not be rich, lest they forget thee. Hear then my humble supplication," &c.

"May 8.—Eternal Lord God and merciful Father, look with thy continued goodness on me and mine. Give me a thankful heart, and teach me to do thy will. Give thy grace and Holy Spirit to thy people, that they may forward the great work of educating the poor, so that the hearers of thy word and the doers of thy will may be multiplied through the land, and this I beg"—

"May 23.—I attended the dinner for the Children's Friend Society at the London Tavern, and was happy beyond expression to see the favour in which we were held by the public. £425 was collected at the table."

"May 29.—And now, O most holy and bountiful Lord God, how shall I praise and thank thee worthily for all thy mercies—for the blessings of only the past week! Behold, thou hast filled my heart with joy and gladness at the prosperity of our schools. Surely thou art a God who hearest and answerest prayer. Surely thou, O God, hast blessed and crowned our endeavours with honour. Our children are happy, and their lips taught to praise thy adorable

name, and to seek the salvation of thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Make us more holy and fitter each day to approach the footstool of thy mercy seat. Cleanse the impurities of our sinful hearts, and grant us ever to love thee, and to shun those sins which brought down thy just anger on the nations which have gone before us. Grant us thy Holy Spirit to be with us always, through," &c.

"Lord, remember us for good. Guard our schools; protect our children in all parts of the world, and let them carry the word of truth to the deserts of Africa, the wilds of North America, and to the distant shores of New Holland and Australia, until the wilderness shall blossom as the garden of the Lord. Thy mercy, O God, is seen; grant us thy peace, and let my country be the resort of virtue and true religion. Grant thy Holy Spirit to our rulers, and establish thy Church among us, through," &c.

"May 20.—My mind is now so much bent upon the improvement and enlargement of our Children's Friend System that I can think of nothing else. May God of his infinite goodness and mercy direct me in the right way. Almighty God, behold thy work. It is of thy good-

ness that our poor children are increasing in number, and improving in virtue and the love of thee. O hide not thy face from us, merciful God, but, as thou hast begun a good work in our hearts, so be pleased to bring it to a fruitful and prosperous end. Spread thy protecting wings over us—improve our means, enlarge our understandings. Let the government see that we are really pursuing the only true means of diminishing crime. Let thy Holy Spirit dwell among us, and grant us thy peace, through Jesus Christ our strength and our Redeemer.”

“Merciful and everlasting God, be pleased to receive our humble and hearty thanks for the mercies of the week past, and bless our endeavours to learn thy will and do it. Bless the Queen and her government. Inspire her and her ministers with good and holy thoughts, and grant that they may teach the children of the poor to love thy name. Strengthen our hands, that we may rescue these poor creatures from poverty and crime, and give to us and to them largely of thy Holy Spirit, that they may spread thy Gospel in the utmost parts of the earth. Hear this prayer, Almighty Father, for thy dear Son’s sake, Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Here we observe the same anxious feelings working in his mind in all their intensity, offering up a fervent and comprehensive prayer for blessings upon all classes of society, and especially that those in the higher should be made the humble instruments of good, to the multitude of the suffering and the destitute. Such was the habitual tone of his thoughts at all times, and under all circumstances; the subject of every conversation, in every society; and the very last that occupied his attention in this world.

On the 28th January he makes the following reflections: "I am quite well, except now and then a kind of hint in my knee or my foot that the gout is ready at a moment's warning; and as it is impossible to foresee what might be the result of another attack, it is my duty to be prepared for the worst; and when a man *is prepared*, the worst is the *best*. Merciful and Almighty God, grant that I may be prepared, that whenever it shall seem good to thee, I may pass from this scene of trial and wickedness to thine everlasting kingdom: and not me only, O my God, but all whom I love, and all whom I have ever loved: grant to my dearest and faithful wife, whom in thy wonderful goodness and

mercy thou hast given to me, to be with me in that everlasting rest which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. Bless the Queen and her Ministers. Let wisdom and truth guide them by thy Holy Spirit to do such things as are pleasing in thy sight, to the good of their country, and to thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

We are quite sure that the preceding extract will recommend itself to the Christian reader, from the ingenuous and sincere expressions of gratitude, love, and confidence it manifests towards God—the cheerful resignation to the divine will, and the ardent affection which he bore to those dear to him; whilst his love for his Sovereign and his country was never for a moment lost sight of, but continued, under all circumstances, to be the subject of his fervent prayers.

The sufferings of the poor in Scotland were at this time very great, in consequence of the failure of the last harvest. This circumstance led to the earnest prayer contained in the next extract.

"May 21.—O God, do not thou desert us; hide not thy face from us, although we have

greatly deserved thine anger; yet spare us, good Lord, and restore to us thy wonted bounty. Look with compassion upon the poor sufferers in the north. Open the hearts of those who have enough, and to spare, of this world's goods, and send them relief in their present necessities. Grant thy blessing on our land; grant us thy peace; and protect our poor children, wherever they may be; and this I beg"—

The fearful desecration of the Sabbath in the metropolis and its neighbourhood was deeply felt by my brother, and called forth this earnest prayer :

"April 30.—O God, how thine unmerited bounties descend upon us thankless creatures! Behold, thy Sabbaths are violated and disregarded by the rich and powerful of the land. Punish not the innocent, O Lord, with the guilty; confound not all in one common ruin. We deplore this madness. Like thy rebellious people, Israel, when they set up their idols, and turned away from their true and living God, they have rebelled against thee: even so are we, after all thy manifold mercies and deliverances, turning away and seeking our own pleasures on thy Sabbath-day. We are not worthy, O Lord,

that thou shouldest care for us; but we know that thy mercy is everlasting, and thy power infinite. Spare us, therefore, good Lord, and turn the hearts of these people to do that which is lawful and right. Grant them thy Holy Spirit, to see the right way; and this I beg"—

Having been under the necessity, whilst in the office of churchwarden, of procuring the dismissal of a person from office, he writes the following prayer:

"March 6, 1836.—Almighty and merciful God, the searcher of all hearts, and from whom no secrets are hid, thou knowest that I have not accused this man without just cause. Thou knowest that he has profaned thy sanctuary by drunkenness, and that in seeking his dismissal I have no other motive than the good of thy church. Turn him from his evil ways, O Lord. Spare him, that he may repent, and be converted, and grant thy peace to him and his family. Save me and mine, O God, from sin, and let me not, while I reprove others, be myself a castaway. All this I beg," &c.

I shall give but one more extract from the diary, but this is an important one. He had first heard that unfavourable reports were abroad

respecting the children which had been sent to the Cape, and he writes:

“Dec. 12.—At the office this morning, where there is an unpleasant feeling among some of the leading members as to the kind treatment of the children at the Cape. I trust in God the next accounts will dispel *their* fears. I have none; and trust have thorough confidence in God that our schools will finally triumph.”

“Dec. 16.—Almighty and everliving Lord God and Eternal Father, accept my humble and hearty thanks for the mercies of the past week, and bring to my mind with a view to repentance, all my sins and omissions, that I may amend my ways, and be perfect before thee. O God, my heart is fully bent and fixed on the welfare of our schools, and yet we are sore vexed and perplexed at the conflicting accounts we receive from the colonies as to the treatment of the children and the prospects of their moral and religious improvement. Do thou, O God, take them under thine especial care. Inspire their employers with a kindly feeling towards them; turn the hearts of our enemies in our favour, and encourage us with pleasing accounts of their welfare, and this I beg, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.”

“Dec. 19.—At the office, where I was concerned to see much despondency as to the success of our children at the Cape. I never will despair, for I feel that God has not forsaken us. I will redouble my efforts and my prayers; for if the Cape does not require the children at all, still they must be trained and educated.”

Among Captain Brenton's papers upon the important subject of giving early education to the infant poor, we find a reference to a speech made by Lord Brougham, in the House of Lords, on the 24th of May, 1835, which appears so completely confirmatory of the arguments which my brother had incessantly urged upon this subject, that I feel justified in giving an extract from it. His lordship in the course of his speech upon the education of the people, disapproves of the system pursued in our national schools, and amongst other objections he observes, “That they are only open to children too far advanced in years. I consider the establishment of infant schools one of the most important improvements, I was going to say in the education, but I ought rather to say in the the civil polity of this country, that have for centuries been made. I believe no

one who has had an opportunity of observing these institutions will feel the least hesitation in assenting to this opinion, and in confessing how desirable it is that the system should be generally adopted. But I wish now particularly to call the attention of the House to the reasons of fact, on which alone the usefulness of infant education is established. I assert, that we begin much too late with the education of children. We take for granted, that they can learn little or nothing under six or seven years old, and we thus lose the very best season of life for instruction. Whoever knows the habits of children at an earlier age than that of six or seven, the age at which they generally attend the infant schools—whoever understands their temper, their feelings, their habits, and their talents, is well aware of their capacity for receiving instruction long before the age of six. The child is at three and four, and even partially at two and under, perfectly capable of receiving that sort of knowledge which forms the basis of all education. But the observer of children, the student of the human mind, has learnt but half his lesson if his experience has not taught him something more. It is not enough to say that a child can learn a great

deal before the age of six years; the truth is, that he can learn, and does learn a great deal more before that age, than he ever learns, or can learn in all his after life. His attention is more easily roused in a new world; it is more vivid in a fresh existence. It is excited with less effort, and it engraves ideas deeper in the mind. His memory is more retentive, in the same proportion in which his attention is more vigorous. Bad habits are not yet formed, nor is his judgment warped by unfair bias. Good habits may easily be acquired, and the pain of learning be almost destroyed. A state of listless indifference has not begun to poison all joy, nor has indolence paralyzed his powers, or bad passions quenched or perverted useful desires. He is all activity, enquiry, exertion, motion; he is eminently a curious and a learning animal—and this is the common nature of all children, not merely of clever and lively ones, but of all who are endowed with ordinary intelligence, and who in a few years become, through neglect, the stupid boys and dull men we see.”*

If this view of the effect of early education

* Speech on “Education of the Poor,”—see pamphlet published in 1835, p. 12.

be correct, of which there can be little doubt, how important it is that measures should be immediately adopted for the general education of the infant poor throughout the empire: not left to the benevolence of those who are willing to support infant schools, but that they should be forthwith established, particularly in our cities and large towns, by the immediate interference of Government, and at the expense of the State. The outlay might be considerable, but the benefit would be proportionably great, and produce ultimately a higher return for the capital so employed, than by any other means which could be devised; in a pecuniary point of view, by the reduction of poor rates, diminishing the expense of prisons and workhouses, the hire of transports and the cost of the penal colony; and morally, by the withdrawing thousands from vice, indolence, and villainy, and making them, under the divine blessing, useful and valuable members of the community here, and, above all, leading them to everlasting happiness hereafter.

We find in the "Morning Herald," of the 1st of June, 1838, the account of a meeting in aid of the Children's Friend Society, which was the object of its founder's continual solicitude, and for which he offered up such fervent petitions:

“Yesterday the annual meeting of the friends and supporters of this admirable institution was held in the lower room, Exeter Hall; his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge in the chair. This society was established in the year 1830, with the view of preventing juvenile vagrancy, and substituting useful, healthy, and profitable employment for that idle and disorderly course of life. The meeting was attended by a numerous assemblage of ladies and gentlemen of rank and high respectability, amongst whom we observed the Right Hon. the Earl of Eldon, the Right Hon. the Earl Grosvenor (the president of the institution), Sir Charles Lemon, M.P., Mr. Gally Knight, M.P., Mr. Gibson, M.P., Sir Arthur De Capel Brooke, Bart., Baldwin F. Duppa, Esq., John Francis Maubert, Esq., Mr. Serjeant Adams, Captain Brenton, R.N. (to whose philanthropy and zeal the society owes its formation, and to whose unwearied exertions in its behalf the success which has attended its operations is in a great measure, if not entirely, attributable), the Dowager Marchioness of Hastings, Lady George Murray, the Hon. Miss Murray, Mrs. Bowen, &c.”

The whole of the report, with the speeches,

will be read with deep interest; but as they occupy several columns, they are too long for insertion here. I trust I may be excused for giving that of Captain Brenton, as, however it may be deficient in eloquence, it will shew the energy of his character, and the irrepressible feelings under which he thought and acted, whilst advocating the cause of the destitute children of the poor.

“ Captain Brenton then rose to propose a resolution of thanks to the ladies’ committee of management. The gallant officer, on presenting himself to the meeting, was hailed with enthusiastic applause. He said he should trespass but a short time on the meeting, as he felt he had been anticipated in almost every thing he had to say by the previous speakers. This society owed its origin to the circumstance of two poor girls having been murdered by their mistress in the parish of St. Pancras. From that time, he made it his business to visit constantly the workhouse of Marylebone, and he had observed with great dissatisfaction the system of apprenticing the poor children at an early age, the only motive for which was the getting rid of the expense of their maintenance in the workhouse. On one

occasion he observed the poor children tearing the meat to pieces with their fingers, and upon his asking 'Why they were not provided with forks?' he was answered, 'Because the children would steal them.' That was in Marylebone workhouse. From that time he had made every effort to effect an amelioration of the system. He was then a guardian of the poor; but all his exertions to effect the object he had in view were counteracted: he was out-voted—he was defeated—and he was almost tired. His next step was to petition the Lords and the Commons to do away with the system of imprisoning children under sixteen years of age. His petition to the Lords was presented by the Bishop of Rochester, and that to the Commons by Dr. Lushington, and although the matter of the petition had, in both Houses, been honoured by being made the subject of a discussion, he heard nothing more of it. He then put on his uniform, and attended the court of his late Majesty William IV., to whom he presented a petition. His Majesty graciously received the petition, and some short time afterwards his Majesty's thanks were conveyed to him through Sir Herbert Taylor, but nothing further was done. He

(Capt. Brenton) then wrote and addressed to the public no less than seven pamphlets, claiming the co-operation and assistance of the public in effecting his object. But while he was thus working to save people from destruction, he was seriously opposed by many well-intentioned persons, and that was by the encouragement they gave to vagrancy by giving money to street beggars. After devoting his attention to the subject for more than 23 years, he was convinced, and more and more confirmed in his opinion, that the money given to street beggars had the effect of bribing the labourer from his industrious habits. It was astonishing to find to what lengths those people would go to excite the commiseration of the benevolent. He assured the meeting that he had himself detected a case where a leg was broken in order to effect that object; and he had no doubt in one case that blindness had been produced for that purpose. He could state from authentic sources, that there were no less than 16,000 vagrants, who earned from 5s. to 30s. a day by begging. These facts he was in a condition to prove, if necessary. He had, however, the satisfaction to state, that he had in a great measure stopped this system of vagrancy. On

Tuesday last, he (Captain Brenton) had visited Newgate, and had passed two hours in going over the prison. There was there a fine child, a boy, who was tried for stealing 50*l.*; and the judge told the child, on his trial, that the only salvation he could give him was to send him to the hulks. Now he (Capt. Brenton) thought that there was no salvation in the hulks. But if the child had been intercepted before he got into Newgate, and brought to the institution, he was convinced that the society would have saved him from the destruction which now inevitably awaits him. He (Capt. Brenton) did not approve of this system of moral extermination employed for the reformation of juvenile offenders, as he was convinced it was founded on a mistaken principle. It was like the system of conquest and civilisation adopted towards the American Indians. In order to conquer, and then to civilise them, that unhappy people were exterminated by the sword. That was precisely the way in which children were now treated. This system reminded him of an anecdote he had heard of a blacksmith, who was hammering at a horse-shoe. 'Tom,' said he to his little son who was standing by, 'I can't harden this iron.' 'Try the

horsewhip, father,' answered the boy, 'for you've hardened me with it.' Many of the boys entreated him (Capt. Brenton) to send them to sea. But he had no means of doing so. He wanted no emolument—he had applied for a ship, but his request was not granted. What he wanted was, to see boys become ornaments of their country. Fifteen thousand boys could be annually supported on board the ships of the navy, and they would be found to be much better seamen and members of society than if they had graduated at the prison as their college. After mentioning several instances of juvenile delinquency, which had come under his observation, in all of which the most shocking depravity was exhibited, the gallant officer noticed the system of education adopted at the schools of the institution. In them the children were taught their duty to God and their neighbour. No bad language was allowed to be used. The boys were not overworked, but were allowed their pastimes and healthful recreations. They were taught agriculture, and, above all, they were instructed in religious principles, and brought up in strictly religious habits. No punishment was resorted to, except that of

locking-up; and such was the gentleness and kindness exercised towards them, that they possessed no fear—except one, they were afraid of displeasing their benefactors. In fine, he challenged the closest inspection of their institution, feeling confident that the more closely it was examined, and the more generally its principles and objects were known, the greater would be the countenance and support of the public. The gallant and philanthropic gentleman concluded his speech, which was received throughout with repeated applause, by moving the resolution.”

The extract which I insert from the “Times” newspaper, of the 23rd of February, 1838, is so completely confirmatory of the arguments used by my brother, upon the subject of youthful imprisonment, and of the extreme to which this wretched system was carried, that its insertion here becomes indispensable. The memorandum in the diary, for the 25th, will shew how deeply the writer felt upon the subject of the increasing advocacy in behalf of the poor little sufferers, and how earnestly he prayed for a better order of things:

“Mr. Laurie stated, before the Middlesex

magistrates, that there were at that time three children undergoing the punishment of confinement in separate cells in the Penitentiary: their ages seven, eight, and ten. When the little girl of seven years of age was taken to the Penitentiary, the matron asked her what she could do for her, the child replied she should like to have a doll. The other two, when the matron went to lock them up in bed, were found to have made up their clothes into dolls, which they were nursing. Now, could it be said by any person in his senses, that such children were subjects upon whom the exercise of the separation system ought to be made? Were not such cases sufficient of themselves to wring the hearts of all classes of civilized society? But what could be expected to result from so accursed a system as that of the separation fancy?

“The Chairman (Mr. Serjeant Adams) said, as far as the cases of the children were concerned, he lamented to say, there was too much truth in the statement which the court had just heard. There was a child of seven years and a half old only, who in the month of January had been sent to the Penitentiary, where she had been ever since an inmate of one of the solitary

cells of that establishment, of which she was likely to remain an inmate for two years more. He was at the same time, however, bound to say that every attention, so far as it could be carried into effect, was shewn to her. The other two children, who were somewhere about ten years of age, had been the occupants of solitary cells for twelve months, and must, in accordance with the terms of their sentence, remain so for one year more. There was every care taken of them, consistently with the rules of the prison. Such were the facts, and it was impossible for them to be disputed. It was quite manifest to any person who spoke to them, that they had not been in the habit of holding conversation with any person for a considerable length of time.

“Mr. Hoare believed that either that day or to-morrow would see these poor children released from their confinement; a release for which they were indebted to the active exertions of the learned chairman of that court.

“Mr. Laurie—Yes, in conjunction with Mr. Tulk. To the kindness of these two gentlemen was the country indebted for the removal of this foul blot from its character. The magistrates,

it must be remembered, had no controul over the matter; it was entirely subject to the management of the Government, and the inspectors, who had their own rickety propositions to carry out. If these gentlemen succeeded, it was perfectly clear that our gaols would be turned into receptacles for lunatics, instead of places of punishment for criminals.

“Mr. Tulk said, with regard to the children he had taken a more than ordinary interest, inasmuch as, from enquiries, he was satisfied the youngest in particular was an improper object for the punishment inflicted on her. The case was this: the child had been convicted at Manchester of having stolen certain goods, which the mother had received, knowing them to be stolen property; the child, most unaccountably, especially too when her years would furnish sufficient proof that she could not altogether be aware of the nature of the offence, was sentenced to transportation, while the mother, the receiver, was sentenced to six months imprisonment; only the sentence upon the child was commuted into imprisonment, under the separation system, in the Penitentiary.

“The chairman said, he did not think he should

be betraying confidence if he were to state, that with respect to the poor children who had been spoken of, a correspondence had taken place between the government and himself; from which he had reason to believe Lord John Russell was at length convinced that the solitary dwellings in the Penitentiary were not exactly suited to children of tender years; and he further held a document in his hand having attached to it the name of 'Victoria,' and bearing also the signature of Lord John Russell, from which he hoped there was a dawn of a beginning of some improved alteration in reference to the punishment of children, with a view of replacing them in the paths of virtue. It at all events induced him to suppose that the government was at last brought to the conviction, that separate confinement, in the Penitentiary, was not the mode best calculated of effecting their object.

"Mr. Broughton, in reference to the statement of the worthy magistrate, Mr. Hoare, as to the confinement of a prisoner, in America, for 13 years, would beg to ask whether that party was kept in such confinement during the whole period?

"Mr. Hoare. — Yes. The door of the cell

for those prisoners was opened for their admission when they went in, and they had been there 13 years before it was again opened to let them out."

To shew how deep an impression was made upon his mind by this awful statement, published on such irresistible authority, I quote from his diary the following earnest prayer, evidently offered up upon the occasion, as it was written on the 25th.

"Sunday, 25th Feb.—O most merciful and wonderful Lord God, Creator of the Universe; when I look back at thy wonderful mercies bestowed upon me and mine, and above all (after our redemption) on thy providential care of our schools, my brain is inadequate to conceive and my tongue to speak thy praises. O Lord God, pardon the sins of our rulers for having shut up the poor female children in the solitary cells of Milbank. Open the doors of the prison-house, and let the captives go free. Strengthen the hands, and confirm the good resolutions to adopt the plan which thy servant has suggested, that children be no more sent to prison, but kindly and carefully trained up in the knowledge of thee their God. And this I humbly beg for

Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen."

As the principal object I had in view in publishing the life of my brother, was to advocate the cause of the Children's Friend Society, and to vindicate his memory and character from the charges brought against this institution of which he was the founder, I trust I shall be excused for having entered so much into detail with respect to his efforts for its promotion and extension; and that a few words relative to the charges which, I feel certain, arise rather through thoughtlessness than malevolence,—opinions lightly taken up, and circulated, but at the same time most unjust and painful to the truly excellent men who undertook the management of the Institution, and persevered under every discouragement, until their funds became so reduced as to render it imperative upon them to dissolve it.

Where charges are founded upon more than questionable authority—upon letters said to have been written by characters acknowledged to be of the worst description, even by their own relatives—we should have expected that they would have been received with caution, and particularly by a respectable magistrate upon the bench, who

in commenting upon them must have been aware of the sanction which his opinion would give to a report to which he seemed to give credit. It was not too much to expect that a reference would at once have been made to the authorities of the district where the grievances complained of were said to have taken place. That iniquities may abound in our Colonies, as well as in the Mother Country, is but too true; but in all there are the same means of appeal, and of procuring redress. That great vigilance is requisite to prevent oppression in those places long accustomed to slavery, we freely admit, and that the Cape boor may be guilty of oppression; but that no difficulty whatever exists to prevent an appeal is evident by the letters from the young emigrants which have already reached their friends in this country. With how much greater facility might a complaint have been made to the authorities at Cape Town, to the district magistrates, or the members of the Committee, who readily and humanely undertook the protection of these children on their arrival. That these references were made, the petitions heard, and the cases investigated, we have abundant proof by the documents we propose to offer. Even the Hot-

tentot is no longer the oppressed being which he was for many years after the Cape became a British Colony. The single-handed exertions of that excellent man, Dr. Philip, proved that no system of tyranny could be carried on with impunity. The case of the boy Trubshaw shews the facility with which complaints might be forwarded, as well as fabricated. Soon after his return to England, we find him in Newgate, where he behaved so ill, and made such exaggerated statements to his fellow-prisoners, that the Governor was at last obliged to separate him entirely from them. One of the Managers of the Children's Friend Society saw him in Newgate, in the presence of the Governor and two other persons. He prevaricated to that degree, that he was asked how he could expect to be believed in any one of his statements? to which he replied, "Oh! I don't like to speak before so many persons, it always confuses me." His father declared, that he was so addicted to lying and pilfering, that he sent him to the Cape in the hope of getting rid of him for ever. But in order effectually to vindicate Captain Brenton and his excellent associates from the sweeping charges brought against them in the daily papers,

and to shew the candour and the energy with which they acted under such circumstances, I refer the reader to the statements laid before the public at the dissolution of the society; and it will from these undoubtedly appear, that every possible precaution was taken to secure to the little emigrants all the advantages which the Society had in view for them, and to protect them to the utmost from the snares and dangers to which inexperienced youth must be exposed in any part of the world. I will not apologize for the length of these documents—they belong to the history of my brother, and form his defence against the charges brought against him, so injurious to his memory and the cause which he so strenuously advocated. This correspondence, I feel confident, will be read with approbation, and be considered valuable, not only for the purpose of vindication, but as regarding the subject of emigration in general.

The following letter from Captain Brenton to Lord John Russell will shew how long and how anxiously he had thought over the state of the juvenile poor—how he had made his professional experience available in collecting every

argument which he concluded might give weight to his opinions, and bring the question in all its bearings fairly before the government. It will be observed that the range which his ideas took upon the subject was of very considerable extent, and went far beyond the present relief or even the future prospects of this suffering part of the community. They had a constant reference to a great and national benefit: to the establishing the means of an effectual and ready system for manning the navy. He never for a moment lost sight of this most important object, and one so intimately connected with the welfare and success of the profession to which he was so fondly attached, and which held a very deep interest in his heart to the very last day of his life. We may indeed say that his very last day was devoted to efforts for ensuring the comforts and promoting the welfare not only of the maritime population of the empire, but in making a provision for the widows of such as had lost their husbands through the fury of the elements, and enabling them to bring up their orphan children in the career in which their gallant parent had lost his life, in promoting the commerce or in ensuring the safety of his country; and that they might

be brought up in a well founded confidence, that whatever might be their own fate in a profession so full of danger, and requiring such a degree of intrepidity and enterprise, that a certain provision would be made for those dear to them, and who might otherwise be plunged in want as as well as affliction by their bereavement.

“To the Right Honourable Lord John Russell.

“MY LORD,—Encouraged by Mr. Mark Phillips’s letter of the 28th instant, in which he says that your Lordship will ‘give my suggestions your best consideration,’ I lose no time in laying them before you.

“It is too evident that vice and crime are on the increase among the youth of the lower classes, while in the middle and upper ranks it is pleasing to observe a strong religious and moral feeling making every effort to counteract the fatal contagion.

“That reformation of character cannot be effectually attained by any penal enactment or legal punishment, however severe, has been proved by the experience of ages; and all the executions and floggings through the fleet during the late war tended only to disgust the good

seamen, and to render the bad ones more reckless and desperate.

“Eight years’ experience of the good effects of early training and education of children, even of the most depraved moral habits and character, has established the fact, that mildness, firmness, and gentleness will effect that which the terrors of the law have failed to do.

“This demonstration having been made and proved by the Children’s Friend Society, it now only remains by the more general application of its system to make it nationally useful, and thus to purify that class of the population from which our prisons and our convict hulks and penal colonies derive their victims.

“In the present instance, I will confine myself to the melioration of the condition of our seamen, the class of people to which I have been the longest attached, and among whom I have passed my whole life.

“By a proper course of training and educating of young sailors, I feel convinced that not only may revolting punishments be dispensed with, but impressment also, that national sin and disgrace, which, where it procures one seaman, deprives the navy of ten, and forfeits the affections

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of all. Giving a well-trained and a well-educated seaman better pay and treatment than he can procure elsewhere, will be quite a sufficient bulwark against desertion or treachery. Men would then seek to enter the navy; and their only punishment would be expulsion from our ships. Had we done this from the year 1806 to 1812, we should have saved the expense and bloodshed of the last American war.

“In order therefore to shew how such a class of people might be raised up and encouraged, I propose, in the first instance to limit my operations to the number of 1000 boys; for these I should require a three-decked ship, to be moored, head and stern, at Blackwall, rigged with light masts and yards, to have her sails bent in summer, and 16 guns for exercising.

“Through this ship any boy intended for the maritime profession should go; and not less than two years’ education and training, with a good character, should entitle him to enter the sea service, naval or mercantile.

“An institution of this description would be at once an auxiliary to the civil and naval power, and is indispensably necessary to the completion of the system so effectually practised and established at Hackney Wick.

“It is an undisputed fact, that the boldest and most talented of the uneducated classes are to be found at an early age the inmates of our prisons and convict hulks; where, confirmed in vice and hatred to their country, their next step is to a male Colony of desperate villains in a distant land, where they will assuredly one day repay, with fearful interest, the unmerited suffering heaped on their early youth by the defect or severity of the law.

“These children it has been my earnest endeavour, for the last eight years, to snatch from infamy and destruction; and by saving them, to save their country. The cultivation of their talents, under kind, vigilant, and skilful instruction, would reclaim them; and instead of violaters of the law, they would become its firmest support.

“A boy, in good health, of robust frame, above ten and under seventeen years of age, having by some criminal act forfeited his liberty, I should be willing to receive, and to train, agreeably to the plan laid down in my letter to Sir James Graham, (herewith sent.)

“I would have the power of punishment, that I might be enabled to show how easily and fa-

vourably it might be dispensed with. I would consent to receive 40 per cent. of such boys, 30 per cent. from Greenwich Hospital School, and 30 per cent. of such volunteers, selected for personal prowess and talent, as the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty would permit. Had I been honoured with the command of the Ordinary, as I requested, I could have carried this plan into effect, without any additional expense to the Government. But in order to be perfectly combined with the civil power, it would still be necessary to have a ship at Blackwall. Desertion would be of rare occurrence, after a few months' trial. Early association, kind treatment, the remembrance of happy days and pleasant companions, are among the strongest ties to our country and kin. The prospective advantages daily accruing and increasing in value, with a certain provision for age and misfortune, would combine to take an irresistible hold on the mind, and bind the youth to his country with chains stronger than any ever forged by art or put on by impolicy.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.

“ EDWARD PELHAM BRENTON.

“ March 30th, 1838.”

We know that Captain Brenton made repeated applications to have a ship appropriated to receiving destitute boys, and bringing them up to the sea in the same manner as those on board the Marine Society's ship, in which he was anxious to make the experiment of his long-cherished plan for rescuing the unhappy juvenile poor from their degraded state, and bringing them up as a valuable portion of our sea-faring population.

Should it be asked why, with the existing institution of the Marine Society, another should be required, we answer, that from the circumstance of long-proved utility and excellence of that establishment, it becomes of the utmost importance that others should be established; and we earnestly wish that every port in the empire had its Marine Society's ship, and its sailor's home; but, taxed as the benevolent portion of society is already, by the innumerable demands upon it for charities of every description, we must not expect to derive the necessary resources from public subscription, and we cannot but think the speculation of Government making the experiment, a very sober and reasonable one, particularly when it must be evident

that the expense to be incurred in a work of so much real benevolence will be in a great measure refunded by the diminution of prison expenses and transportations. We cannot help thinking that the employment of a few thousand pounds in such an object would not only have been justifiable, but praiseworthy, and, moreover, would have been the very last pecuniary measure the propriety of which would have been questioned.

How far the above application in favour of poor boys was expedient or justifiable, may be seen by the accounts with which our daily papers are filled, of the atrocities committed by youthful depredators. If children are thus early initiated and rendered familiar with vice and crime, as well as with the interior of prisons, and all their concomitant horrors, how can we be surprised, if at the age of manhood they should become so expert in iniquity, and so inimical to the peace and welfare of the county, of which, under a different mode of early instruction, they might have become its defenders, and the promoters of its best interests.

In order to shew the intimate connexion between the system of education proposed by Captain Brenton for the juvenile poor, and the

means of manning the navy, we shall offer a few remarks upon the system of impressment, which must, before long, demand the most serious attention of our legislators, and perhaps be abolished by the mere force of general opinion before any other means are adopted or can be adopted to man our fleets. We are bound in candour to admit that very great exertions have been made by successive administrations and Boards of Admiralty to improve the situation of our seamen, to meet their wishes, to promote their comfort, and to make a provision for them when no longer capable of serving, and we hope and believe that this anxiety for their welfare has not been lost upon them. Sir James Graham's bill has corrected many of the inconveniences to which the service was exposed in raising men, and must operate most favourably towards those who nobly step forward at the first outbreak of hostilities. We hope to see the day when the seaman who by long and faithful services has become possessed of a well-earned pension, shall continue to enjoy it, in addition to his pay when serving afloat in the navy. To some the supposed enormous expense attending such a measure is an insuperable objection. We say supposed, because it is a fact

that little if any additional expense would be incurred, for the pensioned seaman now, aware that he would be deprived of his pension should he enter the navy, turns aside to the merchant service, where he can get higher pay, and retain his pension; whilst the man who enters the navy in his room obtains the pay he would have received, and consequently both pay and pension are still paid by the state.

We believe that the regulations made from time to time for the mitigation of punishment have had the happiest effects, not only as to the seamen, but they have relieved the captain from a very heavy degree of responsibility and acuteness of feeling. The frequency with which the men are now paid their wages abroad, has, we believe, been attended with the very best results. The seamen have learned the proper value of money, and made their wages to contribute to their comforts in detail, instead of being lavished away in the mass at the end of a foreign station, in the most disgusting profligacy and reckless extravagance. This measure which we once thought might be injurious to the navy, we are brought to consider a most salutary one. It is an appeal to the reason of the sailor, and to place

him on a much higher footing than that on which he formerly stood, and when his conduct on shore justified the appellation given to him of being a child of a larger growth. The well filled chest of clothes, and the comfortable, abundantly supplied mess, are becoming the distinctive marks of regular bred seamen; and they now begin to take that pride in their daily welfare which was formerly confined to the display of extravagance on the paying off day.

Captain Brenton when touching upon this subject says: "The Government has listened with attention to every suggestion, and many have been offered with the hopes of dispensing with the necessity of impressment; but after the most anxious investigation it has only been enabled to alleviate the evil which it could not cure. Increase of provisions and pay was granted, equal to the demands of the seamen themselves; since which pensions have been gratuitously offered to merit and long service. Greenwich Hospital which, since the reign of William III., has been the asylum of those worn out in the service of the country, or incapacitated from labour by wounds or disease, has been improved in its establishment, consolidated with the Chest of

Chatham, and rendered a comfortable retirement. The out-pension provides for those who prefer remaining with their families, or who cannot, for want of room be admitted into the house. The severity of punishment afloat has been mitigated, and every restriction imposed upon the captain to prevent the infliction, compatible with discipline and the existence of the navy; and let it be remembered that when the mutiny took place in 1797, no complaint was made by the delegates on this subject, nor of impressment—a proof that neither was considered as an intolerable grievance. As a proof also that the sailors themselves are aware of the necessity of strict discipline, the punishments inflicted by the delegates, during the mutiny, for neglect of duty, drunkenness, and *insolence to their officers*, exceeded any thing usually ordered by the captains on such occasions.”

But the most conclusive arguments against the deplorable system of impressment is that contained in the work of Rear-Admiral Griffiths upon this subject. He fully displays all its evils, but he acknowledges his inability to point out an efficient substitute for manning the Navy. If any could have been found under the existing order of

things, we believe he is the man who would have discovered it; and his not having done so, impels us to the conclusion that it is irremediable by any other means than educating children for the express purpose to supply the demands of the Navy; and we repeat, that great as the expense might be, (and it certainly would be great,) there are very many circumstances which will largely contribute towards defraying it. In addition to those already stated, I would mention the *impress service*, the cost of which, when the various rendezvous, officers, press-gangs, tenders, &c., are taken into calculation, amounted during the late war to an enormous sum, besides keeping out of the navy a great many useful hands, even prime seamen, and placing them in situations sure to corrupt and ruin them.

The professional ardour of Captain Brenton led him to view the subject of manning the Navy with intense interest, and attentively to consider in what way it might be best effected. Although he always admitted impressment to be indispensable under existing circumstances, and to be justified only by stern necessity, when the safety of the country might be compromised by the want of a sufficient naval force; his efforts in

behalf of the juvenile poor led him to see a prospect of making, from the redundant and destitute portion of the population of our large cities and seaport towns, a nursery from which not only the mercantile marine, but the Royal Navy itself might derive such liberal supplies as might in time enable the Government to dispense with a system which pressed so hard upon the most laborious part of our fellow-subjects, and which is attended with so much positive suffering and hardship. It was not, however, by clearing our prisons of the adult criminal, and transferring them to our ships of war, a practice far too common, until put a stop to with a firm hand by Lord Melville, in the late war; but he proposed that we should avail ourselves of the opportunity of the numerous children among the destitute families of the poor, collecting them at an early age in ships provided for their reception in all our great seaports, and by religious and useful education, to train them, by degrees, for the naval or merchant services. It may be readily supposed that no compulsion was intended, but the will of the child should be indispensable to his being received—that all should be volunteers. Nor can any doubt be entertained but that more

than sufficient numbers would be found for this purpose. The sea is the Briton's element. There is almost an universal fondness amongst children for a life which possesses so many charms and so much excitement to the young. This is quite evident to all who reside in a seaport, and observe the prevailing habits of the children, and the delight with which they enter into sea-faring occupations—a boat in a surf, or in a gale, has all the charms for them that a spirited horse has for the young landsman—and the boy who has returned from his first voyage is the envy of all his younger companions who eagerly look forward to the period when they also may have to relate the wonders of the deep.

The first suggestion of such an establishment as here proposed may be calculated to startle the reader, and appear visionary and impracticable, but should not be abandoned lightly. It is really worth the serious consideration of a people whose great national dependence is upon the strength of their sea-faring population. The first and most appalling objection which presents itself is the expense it would entail upon the country. It would undoubtedly be heavy, should the establishment be of a nature to afford a permanent

supply to our navy, so as to render the abolition of impressment a prudent as well as a just measure. Great indeed must be the necessity by which these two qualities should be ever rendered incompatible with each other. We can scarcely reconcile ourselves to the possibility that such a necessity should exist even for self defence. At all events, it becomes an imperative duty upon us as a nation, to take every measure to prevent it. But let us proceed with the consideration of the expense of the system suggested, which will certainly be great. We must have large ships in each of our ports for the reception of the boys. We must have officers to superintend them—warrant officers to instruct them—they must have food, and raiment, and bedding—they must have medical attendants and hospitals, and a portion of naval stores for their use while undergoing instruction. All this is true; but there is a considerable set off to be made for the other side of the question. Say 20,000, or I would rather say 30,000 children, from ten years of age and upwards, were received from the distressed families of the starving poor in London, and the sea-ports, to say nothing of the inland parts of the country. And thus taken care of, nourished,

and preserved in health and strength of body and mind, how many of these poor children would but for such an asylum be supported at the public charge by the still more expensive machinery of prisons and workhouses—be transplanted to another hemisphere, from crimes committed against society. Here we have not only to meet the expense of all these establishments, but to suffer in addition the amount of loss pillaged from society by the youthful depredators; and with respect to the prisons, the workhouses, and other parts of the penal establishments, it must be remembered that they can only be got up at the highest prices. Government never can either build or buy but at the highest rate; a reference to the cost of public buildings will prove this assertion to be correct. Nor are the employers who are set over the poor and the criminal the worst paid men in England. Now let us advert to the cost of our proposed establishments afloat. We have allowed that they must be considerable, but there are many deductions to be made from the general estimate. In the first place, we have many large ships applicable to this purpose, and required for no other. An effectual repair to the bottom, and a certain quantity of paint and tar for

the other parts of the vessel, with chain moorings, would prevent any further necessity for repair for several years: and then the material, such as masts, rigging, boats, &c., the worn or sprung masts of the ships-of-war, no longer fit for sea-service, would be all that would be required; the rope—that also condemned as unfit, or made by the boys themselves in the course of their instruction; the boats of a similar description, in point of value, and to be repaired when required, and others even built for their future use, by the vessel requiring them. The provisions, alone, should be of the best kind, and a liberal allowance given. Here we would allow of no false economy, which is certain of proving extravagance in the end. The clothing, it is true, might be of an inferior quality, and made from the return bales from our ships-of-war: they, also, should be home made. With respect to the officers of the establishment, and their assistants, they are always to be had, and of the right sort. Half-pay officers, with a small addition to their income, their provisions, and their dwelling being provided for them, would find the appointment a most comfortable acquisition. One lieutenant, a chaplain, a surgeon, a purser, boat-

swain, gunner, and carpenter—all that would be necessary—and a crew of ten men to superintend and instruct the subdivisions of boys, might complete the establishment. Such is the plan I should presume to suggest, and such I knew would have been my brother's views, had he lived to see a probability of his proposals being adopted. I foresee many objections which might be made, not only by the Government, on the score of expense, and doubt of expediency, but from my brother-officers; and the first that presents itself is: "Shall this, then, be the foundation of our navy? Shall we have recourse to the dregs of the population for our supply of British seamen?" By no means: the plan suggested is to obviate the direful necessity of impressment. We shall look to our men-of-war and our merchants for volunteers, and hope the day is not far off when they will be crowding into the service, and vying with each other who shall be the first to enter on board a ship ordered for commission. We trust Sir James Graham's Act will do much, and that it will be followed up by the farther indulgence of allowing these men who have obtained pensions for their long and faithful services, being permitted to retain

them, whether employed in the navy or the merchant service. As to the system of discipline, it has, we repeat, been so much improved, and so much attention is now paid to the situation and the comforts of the seaman, that we doubt if they themselves could suggest any alteration from which they could derive a benefit. And of this we may be certain, that when impressment ceases, desertion will cease also: we shall hear no more of it: and what a blessing would this be to the country! In time of peace, such of our seamen as might not find employment at home, might, it is true, be induced to enter the service of other nations; but if no impressment existed, they would return at the first rumour of war, and join heart and hand in the prosecution of it.

As I knew my brother's views upon this momentous and all-engrossing subject had not been entirely formed, and that he has left but little in writing to what he intended, and as we entirely accorded in the importance of rescuing the youthful poor from vice, and making them valuable subjects, I have stated my own sentiments, and offer such suggestions as have occurred to me upon this most important question.

I believe the great utility of our hospitals will be questioned by none, nor can there be any difference of opinion entertained as to what would be the extent of misery and suffering, but for the energy and the liberality by which they have been raised and supported. It is scarcely possible to contemplate, without horror, the state of wretchedness and infection which would be found in all our large towns without them, and how fearful would be the increase of mortality, but for the ready and effectual aid they offer to the suffering poor! The same arguments, however, which are now urged against the charitable institutions proposed by Captain Brenton for the youthful families of the poor, with regard to the expense, would have applied in a much greater degree to the first establishment of hospitals, had not the necessity been so obviously proved from the personal danger of immediate infection. But if we take into consideration the amount of moral infection now pervading the multitudes herding together in the thickly inhabited cities of the empire, the growth of vice and crime, the expenses incurred for keeping this daily increasing portion of our population within such limits as may prevent the destruction of society—the

amazing loss of property annually carried off by robbery and fraud—the cost of prisons and penal settlements—of transportation, or other processes of punishment and precaution, we must feel and acknowledge that the importance of providing against the effects of youthful depravity, so rapid in its growth, and so dreadful in its effects, is not of less moment than precautions against the most malignant and inveterate cholera that could invade our land. In the case of hospitals every item of the cost must unavoidably be of the most expensive description. A fair amount of remuneration to the medical officer to compensate for the expense of his education and the devotion of his time, talent, and health to this most arduous of all employments—the expense of drugs—of food of the best quality, so indispensable to the convalescent—the hire of attendants—the enormous sums required for the buildings and the repairs—and all this outlay without any return, except the recovery of the patient, too often restored to a partial state of health only, and who returning to his place in society, finds it occupied and himself an outcast. Invaluable as such institutions undoubtedly are, those by which multitudes may be rescued from moral infection may be considered

of paramount importance, whilst much that is required for their establishment we have already in hand, lying unemployed. We have ships in ordinary—vessels which by being inhabited would be preserved; officers like the vessels, who, worn out, and unfit for sea service, are fully adequate to the duties required for the care of youth, in the exercise of which they would find occupation and comfort for themselves and families; and the objects for whom the establishment is intended, instead of being turned out, helpless and unprovided for, as must unavoidably be the case in so many instances with the discharged patient from the hospital, may after a few years, say three only, devoted to gaining instruction for the line of life he is intended for, go forth to the exercise of an employment of vital importance to their country, and in which they may become the instruments of abolishing a system which has been so much reprobated, so much deplored, and at the same time almost universally admitted to be indispensable, we mean that of impressment.

Having thus stated what I believe to have been my brother's views upon this subject as well as my own, I shall proceed to give such of his ob-

servations connected with it as I can find among his papers. He says—

“The loss of Mr. Buckingham’s motion on impressment should not discourage him, and I have reason to know that it will not. I am for retaining the power to impress seamen, while I am preparing the way to dispense with its application. Impressment, as a means of manning our fleets, will probably never succeed again. I have seen enough of its effects both in the king’s and merchants’ service to be convinced that it is ruinous to both. Still, the powers of impressment and corporal punishment may not be safely removed from the hands in which they have been deposited: only let the officers holding the sacred trusts use them with the very utmost degree of caution and moderation, until by a better order of things a superior class of *volunteers* is raised and trained up for the naval and merchant service.

“Much has been done to improve the condition of sailors in the king’s service since the peace, but much remains to do. We require an entire new set of men whose habits and manners shall be formed in early youth on the very best principles of temperance, self-government and obedience, prudent foresight, qualities by no

means incompatible with valour and the higher walks of heroism. Blake, Benbow, Shovel, Howe, St. Vincent, Duncan, Nelson, Collingwood, Cook, *cum multis aliis*, were all temperate men. Some of them sprang from before the mast; and I have ever observed in the navy that the greater the man, the less he liked to see the infliction of punishment.

“Some of the finest, the most noble spirited youths of Great Britain are lost in early life by an unfortunate display of those talents and that valour in a bad cause which should be watched and directed to worthy objects. When we see a man calmly meeting death, or enduring the severest punishments known to our civil or martial laws, we ought to reflect with deep humility that a good education was only wanting to make that man (perhaps) superior to his judges: his lot in life was cast among those who neglected or who knew not how to train him; perhaps the dram glass was applied to his infant lips, or the breast that he sucked was polluted with gin; perhaps a workhouse education and the worst associates gave the fatal bias to his character. Thurtel, the murderer, owed not his crimes to himself. Had that unfortunate man been educated and

trained under the system which I now so earnestly recommend, he *might* still have been in the world, a great leader in the senate or in the field. I sat fourteen hours one day, and eight hours the day following, to witness his trial, and came to the inevitable conclusion that he was qualified to be a hero, but lost from the negligence and false system under which he fell in early life. The same may be said of Parker, the mutineer, and many others, whose unhappy exit it has been my duty to attend and record in the naval history of my country. Why then do we consign our youth to the care of people utterly incompetent to the charge? Why send them to prisons and hulks, to dungeons, to be accomplished in vices, whose fruit is crime, and whose punishment ignominy and death? Is it to deter by the terror of example? Behold the increase of crime. Is it for economy? Behold I can educate your child for one-tenth part of the sum which his imprisonment and plunder will cost to the public. There is a passion implanted in the human heart by the wise Creator, which we never think of cultivating, but, on the contrary, allow to be eradicated, and seek to supply its place with bodily torture. I mean shame. It

was the first feeling of our first parents, after the fall; and it pleased the Almighty to supply a remedy to the wounded feeling. With us this amiable passion is soon lost; and the degraded character of the poor who live in large towns, but too strongly attests the fact. The conduct of soldiers and sailors in our sea-ports, or when on service, offers another illustration. The disgraceful and abandoned scenes in a ship of war, when returned from a foreign station, must shock every friend to modesty, to decency, and to Christianity. If we wish to save our country, this must be altered.

“The most jealous and sensitive among the aristocracy need not be afraid of me or my doctrines. I am more highly conservative, and at the same time more thoroughly radical, than any of the most complete ultras of either party. I wish to uphold and to reform at the same time; and it will be impossible to accomplish these objects without the hearty concurrence of the rich and poor—from the king to the lowest of his subjects; and there is a sense of justice and love of mercy widely spreading over the world, and over this country in particular, which gives me reason to hope that the accomplishment of my

plan is at no great distance. Apathy and indifference I can despise; but even opposition itself is fast falling before patience, perseverance, and ocular demonstration. If it were not so, what can we expect but increase of crime, when cause and effect mutually produce each other. The more committals to prison, the greater number of delinquents; *ergo*, the more prisons will be required. Increase of appetite doth grow on what it feeds."

The annexed very flattering testimony of the approbation of His late Majesty, as to the manner in which Captain Brenton's time and attention were occupied, was very grateful to his feelings, and greatly encouraged him to persevere in his endeavours to improve the condition of the younger portion of the working classes.

"St. James's, Nov. 6, 1830.

"SIR,—I have been honoured with His Majesty's commands to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd inst., with the two accompanying pamphlets. It was observed by His Majesty, that your time and attention have been usefully devoted to measures tending to the

Suppression of Mendicity and Juvenile Vagrancy.

“I have the honour to be, Sir,

“Your most obedient Servant,

“J. HAYTON.

“CAPTAIN BRENTON, R. N.,

“18, York Street, Gloucester Place.”

The accompanying letter from Sir John Conroy, written by command of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, must have been highly gratifying to the members of the Children's Friend Society, and to Captain Brenton in particular, from the approbation bestowed from so high a quarter. It will be seen that, upon the establishment of a school for female children, which took place soon afterwards at Chiswick, through the good offices of the Duchess of Kent, it was permitted to assume the name of “The Royal Victoria Asylum.”

“Kensington Palace, 12th March, 1832.

“SIR,—The Duchess of Kent, adverting to your communications with Her Royal Highness relative to Juvenile Offenders in London, desires me to acquaint you, that the interest Her Royal Highness then took continues unabated. Her

Royal Highness sees with satisfaction you have been able to mature the plan then in agitation, which Her Royal Highness trusts may find the support it so well deserves; and to aid which Her Royal Highness desires me to forward you Twenty-five Pounds.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"JOHN CONROY.

"CAPTAIN BRENTON."

The following observations were written in the visitors' book at our asylum, Hackney:

"As the quantity of good internally working in any government may be unerringly known by the quantity of force externally exhibited, it cannot be but this must be one of the best: within these walls is a mystery well worth the study of any man: here is the most strict moral government, and the most abandoned conform to it; here all have liberty, and none fly from it; here they never strike a blow, and none rebel."

A French gentleman, an inspector of prisons, also recorded his opinion in the following marked manner:

"Il est à désirer que le Gouvernement Anglais encourage cet établissement par tous les moyens possibles."

I readily admit, that in inserting these numerous letters and documents found amongst my brother's papers, I have greatly exceeded the limits I had intended to confine myself to, but I could not consistently abridge them, without doing injustice to the subject I had undertaken, and the cause he had so warmly and so conscientiously advocated. I do not deny that he may have been over sanguine in his views, or that he may have appeared, in the eyes of many, to have been enthusiastic or Utopian in his ardent endeavours to promote the welfare of his fellow-creatures and his country; but should his efforts be blessed by effectually rescuing even a small portion of our youthful poor from the misery and degradation in which they were living, his end will have been answered. My object is to bring the subject fairly before the public, and to vindicate his conduct from the charges so thoughtlessly brought against it, by an appeal to the dispassionate judgment of the reader. More than two years have now elapsed since these charges were made; and had there been any foundation for them, they must have been long since confirmed. The contrary, however, has been the case. By a reference to the papers

published by the Society, previously to its dissolution, it will be seen that amongst the whole of the children sent out to the Colonies, the complaints made against them are inconceivably few, particularly when we take into consideration the sources from whence they came, and the manner in which their infancy had been past.

It is with much delight that I have been informed by the Secretary of the Society that there is every prospect of its being re-established upon a large scale in England, under its original and truly benevolent and patriotic managers. Here it may be visited and inspected not only by those who advocate it, but by such as may doubt its expediency. Here the children of the destitute may find shelter, food, instruction, and employment—may be trained up in the purest principles of vital Christianity—and be made, by God's blessing, valuable members of society either at home or in our Colonies—instead of being outcasts, or burdens upon it.

The Secretary adds: "A gentleman, whose name has not transpired, has offered £500 to Mr. Maubert, should the Society be continued, and will, I doubt not, grant it whenever the Committee are prepared to admit children on

the farm." The letter is dated 16th July, 1841.

The known philanthropy of Captain Brenton, and the energy with which he had pursued his researches into the causes of the misery of the lower classes, led undoubtedly to his being called before a Committee of the House of Commons, upon the subject of the Temperance Societies, and to a long examination, which he went through upon the occasion, and which will be found at great length in the published detail of evidence. All must acknowledge the soundness of his judgment in attributing to intemperance the greater part, indeed nearly all the offences committed on board of ships. The judicious conduct of the late Captain Sir John Phillemore led to a very wise reduction in the quantity of spirits issued to the seamen; but the subsequent regulation of the imperial gallon has increased the allowance to a very injurious amount.

The reader of Captain Brenton's evidence, which is too long to introduce here, will observe that questions were put to him in every possible way, and that the answers they elicited proved, in the most convincing manner, that intoxication was the besetting sin of seamen, whether in the navy or merchant service; and

that the accidents, as well as the crimes to which they were so frequently the victims, might in general be traced to that cause. That could a system of temperance be promoted, we should have fewer losses, and much fewer punishments; indeed, were sober habits generally prevalent, we might look for the total abolition of all corporal punishment, "the infliction of which," as Captain Brenton emphatically observes, "is by far the most painful—it may be said the only painful—part of a commander's duty." He also set forth at considerable length, and with peculiar accuracy, the number of vessels of war, and of the merchant service, which had been destroyed in consequence of a prodigal use of spirituous liquors, or carelessness in the management of them, very forcibly proving that more ships have been destroyed by the misuse of spirits than by gunpowder.—See answer to question 3907, p. 425, or, we should rather say, read the whole evidence brought before the Committee upon this momentous subject.

NAVAL HISTORY.

It has already been observed, that the character and conduct of Captain Brenton was peculiarly active and energetic. His mind was continually at work; and, from his early youth, he manifested a lively interest in the profession he had chosen. Its prosperity was his great object, and the subject of his incessant solicitude. As a lieutenant, and in command, he was indefatigable in his endeavours to inspire his young people with the same ardour and zeal in its cause that he felt himself. Every thing connected with the improvement of the naval service attracted his attention, and called forth his exertions. Employment was essential to him—it may be said to have been indispensable. No period of his

life was passed in idleness. On retiring from active service, at the peace in 1815, he began his 'Naval History;' and his principal motive for such an undertaking was the instruction of those who were beginning their career in the royal navy; to give them the advantage of his experience, and to point out to them examples for their imitation, or to put them on their guard against the consequences which are sure to result, at one time or another, to the individual or to the service, from the want of judgment and the due exercise of forethought.

How far he may have succeeded in the attainment of this most important object, is for the public to judge. The work is now before the public, and has passed through two editions. We know that it has excited the disapprobation of many of his brother officers. We lament that it should be the case; but such a result was unavoidable, in the relation of recent events, when not only the relatives of those engaged in them, but the greater number of the actors themselves, were living, to criticise, if not to impugn, the statements in which they were so deeply interested. I can assert, however, with the fullest confidence, that in no one instance where censure

was implied, was the writer influenced by any unkind or personal feeling: when the glory of his country, or the reputation of the profession with which he had so completely identified himself from childhood, appeared to be at stake, he felt deeply, and expressed himself warmly, whether in conversation or in writing, nor could his thoughts or sentiments upon such a subject be easily controuled or repressed; and we must further observe, that however he may have given offence in his narrative, few have questioned his accuracy. The work was undoubtedly written in the bold, uncompromising spirit of an impartial historian, who had counted the cost of the undertaking, and who looked to posterity for the justice which he could scarcely expect from all his contemporaries. The day has already arrived when much of this wounded feeling has been softened down, and when other works upon the same subject have been published, containing far more severe and cutting animadversions than any that can be found in the pages of Brenton's 'Naval History.' Having said thus much, I confidently leave the work to the fair and unbiassed judgment of the candid reader. My observations upon this sub-

ject would have terminated here, but that I feel called upon to come forward in defence of my brother's character, and regard to his memory, and to vindicate him from the sweeping censures passed upon him by a contemporary (and I regret to say a rival) historian, and a Quarterly Reviewer.

That this vindication will lead to a considerable length, I am quite aware; but I hope that it will be given with such a total absence of every acrimonious or unkind feeling; that if it should fail of convincing, it will not offend.

Captain Brenton has, I know, been accused of presumption in attempting to write a naval history, for which, it is asserted, a previous education had not qualified him. This charge may be just, and was anticipated; the deficiency acknowledged, and the motive explained by himself, in his preface, in so straightforward and ingenuous a manner, that it has undoubtedly obtained for him the indulgence which he sought. The defects of composition may be great, but the statement of facts I believe to be unobjectionable. He says in his preface:

“From my first entrance in the service in 1788, to my resigning the command of the

Tonnant in 1815, I have been constantly in the habit of making memoranda of every public event which came under my notice, and of taking sketches of any port in which I have let go an anchor.

“Shipwreck, in 1798, deprived me of a collection of nine years; but youth and carelessness soon effaced the accident from my memory, and I began again to replenish my sketch-books, and to note down observations; not, however, with a view of publishing, but merely for the amusement of myself and friends in the leisure of peace and retirement.

“Having by these means, in my professional avocations and voyages, collected a stock of materials, it was suggested by a near relative, that as the vast field of naval history lay unoccupied by any professional author, I might employ myself while on half pay in a manner useful to myself and the public, by arranging my literary labours in the form in which they are now, with diffidence, presented to the world.

“For three years and a half I have been unremittingly employed in the work; the vast variety and magnitude of the subjects which have attracted attention I have endeavoured to con-

dense, but not to abridge. Many of the facts have no doubt appeared before, in various shapes, and I have borrowed freely from the 'Annual Registers,' and other authentic and valuable works, without attempting to conceal the sources of my information."

He adds the following very just observations upon the importance of the duties which a captain in the British Navy is called upon to execute; and they are well deserving the earnest attention of those who enter the service in the hope and prospect of attaining the command of a ship. A great and beneficial change has taken place in the pursuits of officers of the navy within the last few years. The late Lord Keith, when commanding the fleet in the Mediterranean, was in the habit of saying that the lieutenants of the navy would read nothing but 'Steel's List' (the list of the navy); but this is no longer the case. They may now, in most instances, be considered as reading and even as scientific men; and to them as such we confidently appeal, as to the propriety of the observations alluded to; they are as follow:

"There is perhaps no situation under any government which involves in itself more respon-

sibility than that of captain of a ship-of-war: a match, which by his command is applied to a gun, may, for aught he knows, be the instrument of destruction to thousands of his fellow-creatures. The Leopard and Chesapeake, the President and the Little Belt, and the memorable shot fired from the Leander, which was said to have killed John Pierce, are sufficient illustrations of this proposition. A naval officer therefore can never be made too sensible of the importance of his trust, and of the desirable union in his breast of courage and forbearance; and if to practical skill and valour he can add political foresight, it is impossible to say of how much importance he may one day become to society.

“Much more may be required of our future navy than what has fallen to our lot to witness. ‘Great as our achievements have been,’ says Lord Exmouth, in a letter which his lordship addressed to me on the subject of this work, ‘they will be far surpassed by our successors:’ a prediction which, if not verified, the nation is lost; for, without disrespect to the memory of the gallant admirals (and gallant they certainly were) who commanded our fleets on those oc-

casions, we must see no more of such battles as the 1st of June (1794), nor of the 23rd of June (1795), nor that of the 13th July, of the same year, in the Mediterranean. The eyes of the public are now opened, and they are better able to judge of the merit of a naval action, and of its political consequences, than they were in the days of Keppel and Rodney.”*

There is, undoubtedly, much sound reasoning in these extracts, but they may, at the same time, appear to cast a shade over other parts of the history of the British Navy. It is undeniable that the splendour of many of the victories gained by our fleets in the two last wars, and especially those achieved by the immortal Nelson, did raise the standard of the expectations of the country so high, that no drawn battles, or questionable actions, will satisfy them in future; and the great and crowning event of all—the battle of Trafalgar—will not fail henceforth to guide the judgment of the nation in the estimate of the merits of future actions. That, viewed in connection with such events, the engagements adverted to in this part of the preface will not appear in the page of history as contri-

* Preface to Naval History, c. xi.

buting to our naval reputation, is but too true. That there were instances in each of distinguished conduct, professional skill, and intrepidity, displayed by many individuals, is justly claimed, and readily granted; but these are brilliant exceptions, and can never qualify the actions themselves, with the reputation they ought to have gained for the service.

In all historical accounts, there are and always will be different views taken of the same event, according to the bias or prejudice of self, or party, or friendship. We doubt whether, even in the most complete triumph of either our military or our naval service, there may not be many who are ready to censure and condemn parts, as incomplete and mismanaged: we have heard such charges made against both Waterloo and Trafalgar! If such be the case, we can best form our estimate of the value of any history by its agreement with official documents, or the recorded opinions of eminent men, who have proved, by their professional conduct, their claim to have their sentiments respected. Such has been the authority sought for and followed by the author before us; such has been the great outline of his work; and in filling it up, so far

from being influenced by narrow, personal, or party feelings, he has faithfully endeavoured to relate events as they appeared to him to reflect lustre, or to cast a shade over the object of what might (figuratively) be called his idolatry. Requesting the reader to give him credit for such motives, which would naturally be excited in the breast of one so ardently attached to his profession, and so jealous of its fair fame, we will now proceed to a cursory review of the principal features of this naval history, particularly of such passages as have brought down censure upon the writer; and I hope to shew, that amidst the faults and errors which may be found in the work, and from which few are wholly exempt, the intention and desire will be evident to relate every event with the utmost fidelity, and to offer such reflections as might tend to stimulate or warn those who are now beginning their career in the navy, by the instances of success or failure set before them, with the causes to which each is attributable.

I would now briefly advert to the spirit of rivalry manifested by a contemporary, and exceedingly regret the existence of such a feeling, as the two works were admirably qualified to

have assisted each other, and to have formed between them a rich depôt of materials for the future historian, when recording the events of our days. The two authors had evidently the same object in view, nor was there necessarily any elements of discordance beyond a competition for public favour, of which each might have possessed a full share, without prejudice to the other.

The contemporary history is that of Mr. James, which I readily admit to be a work of great merit, one that evinces much talent, and the most industrious and patient research, and which I believe to be correct in a very remarkable degree. I can only regret that the writer should have indulged in those little traits of sarcasm in his occasional notes, and in the uncalled for general censures upon men who have stood so deservedly high in their profession. The egotism displayed in the prefaces to the two editions, is more likely to amuse than to offend, and rather to hurt the writer than his rival, nor would it be adverted to upon the present occasion, but for the refutation of the charges implied.

To the second edition of the same work, edited by my gallant and talented brother officer, Cap-

tain Chamier, is attached another preface from himself, which will call for some remarks, but which I offer in the most conciliatory spirit.

I hope to stand acquitted of any intention of throwing discredit upon the history of Mr. James. I wish it a wide circulation, and that it may be productive of much advantage to his widow. I have it upon my own book shelves, and consider it a valuable work, not only for general information, but for reference.

In Captain Chamier's preface I find the following definition of the two naval histories—that of Mr. James's being qualified as "A Naval History," and Captain Brenton's as "A Cursory History of Modern Europe, slightly touching upon naval events." I should rather say that the first was the proper title to Captain Brenton's book, and that Mr. James's should be included under the name given to his other valuable work—"Naval Occurrences"—and give my reasons for coming to such a conclusion. The history of the Navy of any country should not be confined to the mere operations of fleets and squadrons; the reader must expect to find some account of the state of the country at the commencement of the war, its internal resources,

its foreign commerce, its colonies, resources for building, equipping, and manning the Navy; the political circumstances which led to the breaking out of hostilities, the relative position of the belligerents, and with a general view of the effect which a naval war would probably have upon the other powers of the world. These are all subjects of first rate importance to be brought before the reader; nor is the state of public feeling, as manifested by the parliamentary debates, uninteresting to the English reader. All this Captain Brenton has been particular in inserting in his work; whilst Mr. James has passed over all but what immediately concerns the maritime position of the contending parties relative to their shipping and colonies. In asserting the superior merits of his work, Mr. James, in his preface to the second edition, says, "Let them (his readers) consider that any of my six volumes (his first edition has only five) contain more matter pertaining to naval history than the five volumes of Captain Brenton." This, as far as relates to history, I cannot admit. Far be it from me to censure Mr. James for the introduction of the names, not only of every officer, but of every person above the rank of the foremast

man, and the detail of every boat affair that ever occurred on any coast. I rejoice to see them recorded, and think the mention of their gallant exertion well worthy of public notice and public admiration, and quite in their place in the narrative of 'naval occurrences,' altogether forming a rich mine from whence the material for history may be procured; but at the same time I doubt the possibility of their being transmitted beyond the present era, as subjects of national history. Again, it must be gratifying to officers of ships in different parts of a fleet to see the history of the deeds of their respective ships detailed by their own shipmates, from extracts made from their own logs, and their own achievements emblazoned by eye witnesses and partakers of their gallant actions. But how are the discrepancies to be reconciled? We can here safely appeal to every officer on the navy list, as to the impossibility of such a result. Such a plan for obtaining historical accuracy reminds me of the painter, who, in order to mark the excellence, or to detect the faults of his picture, put a brush into the hands of the spectator, requesting he would mark either the one or the other. The picture, as might have been expected, was entirely obscured

by these notes of admiration, or marks of disapprobation, and would have but little chance of finding its way to posterity. If such details are subtracted from the pages of Mr. James, which he tells us he has devoted to the great battles, they will be greatly diminished; at all events, we may depend upon the future historian who comes to his work for materials being much puzzled in the choice of them.

The introductory chapter of Brenton's "Naval History" is devoted, in the first place, to a brief statement of the situation in which Great Britain was left at the end of the American war, in 1783, the commencement of the period at which he proposed to begin his history, shewing the effect produced by the loss of so large a portion of her colonies upon our national funds, our navy, and our commerce, as well as our internal resources after so severe a struggle. This surely cannot be objected to as irrelevant, but must, on the contrary, be of essential importance to the reader in preparing his mind for the subject about to be brought before him, and enable him to appreciate the exertions which were made under such trying circumstances. It was in the first American war that the seeds of the French re-

volution were sown, and which produced such a fearful amount of misery to the whole world, and led to the fierce struggle between the two great maritime powers of Europe for more than twenty years duration. Few, if any, of the nations were exempt from the effects of this explosion, and the navy of Sweden was the only one not immediately involved in the contest. The observations which follow are of a very cheering description, and shews with what energy England recovered from the disastrous position in which she had been placed, and in a few years rose greater than ever in power, splendour, and wealth.

I would now offer a few words to the gallant Editor of the second edition of James's "Naval History," and I do so without the slightest feeling of unkindness. I accept, with the fullest confidence and sincerest pleasure, the gratifying testimony he has given of the estimation in which my lamented brother was held by those who knew him, "for philanthropy, assiduity, and professional ability," together with the assurance, that "no man more richly deserves this eulogy;" and I cordially agree with him in opinion when he says, "It is impossible for any man to believe that I answer

his reply with a wish to detract from his character in the slightest degree." Captain Chamier is undoubtedly right in saying that no great work of times past can be written without recourse to the pages of others; and I as freely admit that Mr. James was bound, in duty to himself and to his readers, diligently to consider every statement made by a contemporary writer—to point out any errors he might meet with; and I feel quite certain, that had this been done in a kindly feeling by Mr. James, it would have been thankfully received and attended to.

One of the first objections Mr. James makes to Captain Brenton's work, is to the brevity with which he relates the great naval actions. It is readily admitted that these accounts are far more concise than those of Mr. James's; but it does not follow that they are wanting in importance, or less appropriate to such a work. If it be essential to history that it should be grounded on undeniable documents, and derived from the very best authority, Captain Brenton for this purpose refers to the official account given by the commander-in-chief himself. Mr. James repudiates such a practice; alleging that such statements are sometimes erroneous; and prefers a reference

to the ships' logs, and the accounts given by those who, whatever might have been their opportunities of local observation, were certainly less able to judge of the whole than the Commander-in-Chief, the captain of the fleet, and the secretary; the immediate duty of the latter being to take minutes of every event as it occurred, not only as relating to a particular ship, but to the whole fleet—to both fleets. Here, then, we rest our defence for Captain Brenton's preference to the Gazette letter to any other source of information: not that he rejects the latter, but receives it cautiously. This will, at once, account for the difference between the two authors, as to the length of their respective narratives.

It is admitted that errors have been detected in official letters: that a material one exists in that of Earl Howe, upon the 1st of June, as to the force of the enemy, and the number destroyed (of one ship). This has been corrected, and the mistake recorded. But where will posterity look for authority on which it can rest with greater confidence? What materials can be so valuable to the historian of the peninsular war, as the published despatches and correspond-

ence of the Duke of Wellington, written by the hand of one who planned and executed the campaign? It is much to be lamented that every respectable historian should not avail himself of such important, official information. I was greatly delighted to hear that a history of England had been written by the Rev. Henry Walter, upon Christian principles. I immediately ordered it, and was highly gratified by the spirit it evinced, and the judicious reflections it contained, so admirably calculated to enable young people to discern what is intrinsically valuable, and to distinguish it amidst the false glare which is made to surround the achievements of war. I felt a hope and a confidence that it would be universally circulated; but when I came to these events with which I was personally acquainted, or which came within my own time, and found many misstatements, I was greatly disappointed, and felt the conviction that the success of the work would be much impeded, from the want of accuracy, resulting entirely from inattention to the *Gazette* letters, which, of all documents, are perhaps the easiest to procure. The same errors are to be found in the splendid work of Mr. Allison; and I feel convinced that neither

of these talented and respectable authors will take offence at my having thus noticed these deficiencies: on the contrary, that they will be pleased with the opportunity of correcting them in future editions, which may easily be done. With reference to Mr. Allison's work, I allude particularly to the account of the sinking of the *Vengeur*, on the 1st of June. Such corrections are the more important, as the reader who detects an error in one place, will suspect there may be others which he has no means to discover.

That the Commander-in-Chief himself may err in the representation of minor details, is not to be denied; but we may in general depend upon the accuracy of his relation.

With respect to the victory of the 1st of June, Captain Brenton kept the official letter strictly in view. He dwells but little upon the events of the previous days—barely sufficient to shew why a decisive battle did not sooner take place—but reserves the more minute detail for the day of victory. He begins with an extract from the *Queen Charlotte's* log, and grounds his relation of the battle upon it. The narrative of a sea-fight must necessarily be short, and in gene-

ral consists of a description of the relative position of the adverse fleets—the wind and weather—the attack—the operations of the two Commanders-in-Chief—the manner in which they were respectively supported—the effects of the fire—and the result. Our author has endeavoured to give this in clear and distinct terms, and concludes his account with inserting the Commander-in-Chief's official letter and reports of the conduct of those under his command—the captures made from the enemy—the casualties in both fleets—killed, wounded, prisoners, &c. At the same time, he considered it due to the public, and to those engaged particularly, to give the view as taken from other parts of the line, and publishes the logs of the *Royal George*, the flag-ship of the second in command, and that of the *Orion*; corroborating, in some instances, and occasionally shewing the unavoidable discrepancy of accounts of the same event. The contemporary historian proceeds upon a different plan, and is much more minute; but, disregarding official documents, he relies upon the logs of different ships, and the statement of their officers for his information. We give him full credit for his laborious researches, but we feel at the same

time that his authorities may be questioned. This will be at once admitted by any one who would take the trouble to examine the different log-books. They will be found to differ materially in the different parts of the line, and so will the narrative. We are very far from any intention of throwing discredit upon those private details—we believe to have been faithfully written from imperfect recollection—we have read them with very great interest; but contend they are unavoidably too local for general effect and accuracy.

It has been said that Captain Brenton has omitted many of the details of single actions and boat rencontres. I am not aware of any of the decided actions between single ships or sloops being passed over, but it is admitted, and for the reasons already given, that boat affairs have been left out as exclusively applicable to the present day; general observations have however been made and will be found in various parts of his work, which will convince the reader that he fully appreciated the energy and heroism so frequently manifested on such occasions.

The insertion of the very small portion of debates in Parliament which are introduced into this history, is by no means either irrelevant

or uninteresting. Those upon the preceding peace, at the very outset of the work, appear to be indispensable for a proper understanding of the natural state of public feeling at that time; nor is it unimportant that the reader should keep in view the men by whom the country was governed during the war, as well as those who commanded our fleets; but some of the discussions in the senate immediately related to our naval history, which would be incomplete without them being adverted to. The question brought before the House of Commons, in 1787, upon a recent promotion of flag officers, was deeply interesting to the whole profession; and although lost by a considerable majority at that time, has continued to force itself upon the public notice, until an effectual, although a tardy act of justice, after a lapse of more than half a century, has taken place, and a weight of wretchedness has been removed from the mind of many an aged and gallant officer who considered himself disgraced by being excluded from the list of the navy. They are now restored to their proper place on the list, and the cause may be traced to those very debates to which we refer. The names of the generous advocates for the injured officers

ought to be recorded in the naval history of this country, and we rejoice to see them there. The discussions in parliament upon the state of the navy, will be read with great interest wherever they occur in this naval history, and no apology is required for their introduction.

On the subject of the naval armament in 1787, usually called the Dutch armament, a very slight notice is taken of the debate in parliament upon that occasion, but the King's speech and Mr. Fox's observations in recommending "*attention to the navy, the natural force of the country,*" seems very apposite. There is also much useful information in the debates which took place on the Spanish armament, in 1790, and that on account of Russia, in 1791. They are acknowledged to have been attended with a heavy expence; but the historian justly considers them as having been highly beneficial in preparing the navy for the contest in which they were soon to be engaged. It will be found that wherever parliamentary discussions are introduced into the naval history, they have all the same important bearing upon the great subject of the work.

The question of the navigation of the Scheldt might also have been included in the sweeping

charge as belonging to the "cursory history of modern Europe," but it appears to be intimately connected with the naval interests, not only of Great Britain, but of Europe, and most appropriately introduced here from its connection with the commerce of this country; whilst the description of that noble river, and its capability of raising a naval power within its own banks, is of the utmost importance to be known and appreciated. It also became the scene of naval operations which the work was intended to relate.

Voyages of discovery form a most important part of the naval history of any country. They are deeply and intensely interesting to the reader, and belong with the strictest propriety to the class of maritime affairs. Captain Brenton has accordingly devoted a portion of his work to this subject. Mr. James has touched upon the same events; and in his account of the voyages performed under the direction of Sir Edward Parry, acknowledges that there were transactions growing out of these expeditions as honourable "upon the whole to the character of the British navy, as they were interesting and important to geographical discovery." I would go further, and rank these among the most brilliant of our naval

achievements: the exertions to which they give rise, and the qualities they bring into action are of a far higher character than those displayed in battle, in exertions of a short duration, under a stimulus of irresistible force, when to shew the slightest appearance of timidity would lead to ruin of character, and where success would be rewarded by the fulfilment of the long cherished hopes of distinction, promotion, and profit. Every man is brave, to a certain degree, in action; but how much greater claim to distinction has the navigator who undertakes to explore the polar seas, exposed to contend for days and nights with every suffering and difficulty and danger incidental to a sea life. To the commander these trials must be peculiarly severe. He has them in addition to his personal sufferings in common with others; but he has the still heavier burthen of responsibility: he must continually feel its weight pressing upon him with the greatest force, as the lives of all, under Providence, in a great measure depend upon the exercise of his judgment: the eyes of his country are upon him; there are none of the "pomps and circumstances of war," which lead to the forgetfulness of danger. We all know the effect of the first broadside in

raising the spirits of those who were never before in action; the invigorating effect of the smell of powder, and the cheerful activity of his gallant companions, convert at once the timid into a temporary hero. But where are such excitements to be found, in a long continued period of suffering, the intensity of cold, and the exposure to being wrecked amidst the fields of ice in a tempestuous sea; dangers against which no foresight, abilities, or zeal can guard; when every circumstance tends to repress exertion, and to deaden the faculties; when even hope itself seems to have deserted them. I have always considered the most brilliant part of Lord Nelson's character was that which may be called his moral courage—the intrepidity with which he undertook the most awful responsibility. This was particularly evinced by his pursuit of the French fleet to the West Indies, upon no authentic information, but from the suggestion of his great mind, and his own intuitive judgment, which was hardly ever known to fail him. This very remarkable and noble feature in his character was shewn under every circumstance that called for it. As an instance:—A young commander in the Mediterranean was

ordered to take a convoy of Neapolitan vessels to the port of Calgiari, in Sardinia, to load corn for the supply of the British troops. On receiving the order, he thought it necessary to advert to the circumstance of the Neapolitans being at war with the Barbary States, and to ask how he was to act in the event of falling in with any of their cruisers. The commanding officer not choosing to incur the responsibility of his own act, replied, "you will not meet with any of them," and left the room. The young officer proceeded on his voyage with some degree of anxiety lest he might be called to a hostile conflict with a neutral, and be made a political victim; but falling in with Lord Nelson on his way he put the same question to him. "Let him sink you," said his lordship, "but do not suffer them to touch the hair of the head of one of your convoy." "Now," replied the officer, "my mind is at rest: it is immaterial to me whether I fall in with a Tunisian or a Frenchman, my duty is plain." But to return to our circumnavigators; their position is essentially one of responsibility, and when this is manfully borne, it must establish their undoubted claim to the respect and admiration of the profession.

One great advantage of a naval history is that it contains, or should contain, a record of those who have aimed at distinction from their conduct under trying circumstances. We remember, with peculiar delight, the deep interest we felt in early life in reading Campbell's *Lives of British Admirals*, with whose memoirs we became familiarly acquainted; and we believe such histories to be most instructive in a professional point of view, to the youth intended for the navy. The account given by Captain Brenton of the truly noble conduct of Lieutenant Riou, upon the loss of the *Guardian*, is of thrilling excitement, and well calculated to animate those who may be placed in similar situations. Much time has elapsed since this occurrence took place, but it has lost none of its interest, as will be at once acknowledged on a perusal of the narrative. The short comment by which it is concluded is a very just one:

“The preservation of the *Guardian* was effected by the professional skill of her commander, and by the happy union of those qualities of the mind so essential to the character of a perfect naval officer.”

The following little anecdote goes at once to

the heart. Mr. Crowther, a clergyman who was a passenger in the *Guardian*, proceeding to a chaplaincy which Mr. Wilberforce had procured for him in New South Wales, gives the following account of his interview with Riou, previous to his quitting the ship; he says, "when the ship's condition was altogether hopeless, Captain Riou sent for me into the cabin, and asked me—'Crowther, how do you feel?' 'How! why, I thank God, pretty comfortable.' 'I cannot say I do. I had a pious mother, and I have not practised what she taught me—but I must do my duty. The boats will not hold one-third of our crew, and if I left the vessel there would be a general rush into them, and every one would perish. I shall stay by the ship, but you shall have a place, and be sure you go to the master's boat, for he knows what he is about, and if any boat reaches the shore it will be his.'""*

It would be needless to offer any observations upon the gallant River's state of mind upon this trying occasion; the combined feelings of repentance towards God for neglect of the gracious opportunities he had enjoyed, and resolution to devote what might remain to him of life to the

* Life of Wilberforce, vol. i. 270.

fulfilment of his duties to his companions in distress and to his country. The calmness with which he resolved to stay by his ship, in order to give those whom the boats might contain an opportunity of escaping, and the judicious arrangement he made for safety of his friend, will make a deep impression upon the mind of the reader.

In the same chapter with the loss of the *Guardian*, is contained an account of the disastrous voyage of the *Bounty*, the mutiny of her crew, and the indescribable sufferings of the few who remained faithful to their sovereign; with some interesting observations upon the voyage of M. de la Perouse, who was lost, with his two ships and all their crews, on their return voyage, never having been heard of, although many articles belonging to each have been found on the shores of the Indian Archipelago, and are now in the naval museum, at Paris. Captain Brenton says, "he was an able and persevering navigator: France has done him honor by every mark of public respect done to the memory of a great and good man. No pains have been spared to discover the remains of his ships; vessels were fitted out and sent in search of him; all nations were appealed to, and all have furnished

their slender contribution of information, but none have been able to trace him beyond Botany Bay, or to shed the smallest ray of light on the brave but unfortunate Perouse." p. 109.

It is gratifying amidst the scenes of horror and desolations occasioned by wars, to contemplate a kindly feeling manifested by the belligerents towards the subjects of each other engaged in the pursuit of objects beneficial to the general interests of mankind, and for the improvement of science. This praiseworthy liberality is usually exercised towards the vessels employed on discovery. It was formerly extended to every class of non-combatants, who were taken in battle; the chaplains, surgeons, pursers, and assistant-surgeons, having been constantly permitted to return to their respective countries, when captured in action; and as a proof that this had long been customary, at the breaking out of the war, in 1803, there was actually no place on the *Tableau d'assimilation* of prisoners, for officers of this description; and it was necessary to make a reference to the transport board, in England, for information as to the ranks they should respectively occupy. It is unnecessary to add, that the interruption of so humane a system origina-

ted with Bonaparte. "He opened not the doors of his prisoners." But it is a system which we earnestly hope will be renewed should we be unfortunately engaged in war, and that cartels for the exchange of prisoners will be re-established, which were only discontinued by the French government, from the sordid and ungenerous motive of seeking to deprive us of our seamen, the objects of their just dread, little caring about the prolonged sufferings of their own people, treble the number of ours. It was the same feeling which dictated the harsh and ungenerous measure of arresting Lieutenant Flinders, at the Isle of France, lest he might carry home with him the knowledge of the port, and its weak points.

In chapter xi. we have a fearful account of the corruptions which existed in one department of the service, and we fear but too well founded. The board of naval enquiry shews to what a height abuses and peculation were carried on at home, and from thence we may infer, that on a remote station, the prospect of impunity would stimulate others to avail themselves of the opportunity placed within their reach. A better order of things has now however taken place, and

we believe that no accounts are more faithfully kept, or more honestly discharged than those of the navy, in all parts of the world; and great is the debt the country owes to the Earl of St. Vincent, for having brought the subject before the country.

There is a beautiful little anecdote, p. 347, vol. 1., of the conduct of Captain Newcome, of the *Orpheus*, 32 guns, who having gallantly engaged and taken the French frigate, *Du Guay Trouin*, of 34 guns, after a very severe action, put into the Sechelles, an infant settlement of the French, in the Arabian seas, where they where inhumanly refused the refreshment they required for their wounded; Captain Newcome, in consequence, attacked the island and took possession of it, when he landed the wounded Frenchmen with every thing he could procure for their comfort and cure; he also gave up the cargo of another prize he had taken, laden with agricultural and carpenters' tools, which had been sent out for the use of the settlers.

The account of the capture of that valuable colony, the Cape of Good Hope, is very interesting; and that of the surrender of the Dutch fleet, under Admiral Lucas, by capitulation, to Lord Keith, particularly so, as it is a rare,

though not solitary instance of the kind, and describes with great clearness the law of captures. We must at the same time deeply regret that this law should have excluded our gallant brethren in arms from any share of the capture of this fleet. The decision appears the more extraordinary as they actually contributed, by their presence on the shores of Saldahna Bay, to induce the Dutch admiral to capitulate, for had they not been there, he might, and undoubtedly would, have landed his people and destroyed his ships.

The deep interest which Captain Brenton felt in every thing connected with his profession is manifest in the energy with which he advocated what was truly valuable and meritorious, as well as reprobating what he considered injurious to its welfare; and we well know how warmly he felt towards that truly estimable corps, the Royal Marines. And partaking as I do in these feelings, from the experience I have had of their value, I shall not hesitate in joining my meed of praise to the just eulogium he has passed upon them in his naval history—a part for which perhaps he has incurred censure, as irrelevant to naval history. I have ever given him great credit for

the judgment which he displayed in introducing this subject, and giving a short account of the origin of that excellent branch of our sea-service. It contains valuable information, which, although easy to be obtained from the proper source, has seldom found its way before the public; and I can only regret that, on his late Majesty, William the Fourth, reviewing the Royal Marines, when Lord High Admiral, on Southsea beach, a shorthand writer had not been present to record his observations, and the interesting account he gave of the services of that gallant corps. It must have been highly gratifying to all present. Captain Brenton in speaking of them says, (Vol. i. page 55.)

“The services of this corps are too well known, and too intimately connected with naval history, to require a particular or separate detail. Their motto is, *“per mare et terram;”* and never was motto more appropriate. The garrison duty in our sea-port towns is usually performed by them; they are the first embarked whenever a ship is commissioned, and by their fidelity and willingness are particularly acceptable in the early stages of equipment.

“Desertion is far less frequent in this corps,

than with seamen or landsmen, (blue jackets). They are bound by an oath on entering into the service to be faithful to their king; and to their honor be it said, that, as a corps, this has never been violated.

“They were particularly instrumental in the attack and capture of Gibraltar, in 1704, and fought in most of the battles on the coast of Spain, where our arms were joined with those of Austria, in the War of the Succession. Their history, up to the peace of Amiens, has been very ably detailed, with much interesting matter, by Lieutenant Alexander Gillespie, and it will be sufficient for our purpose, having named that officer and his work, to refer our readers to it, and conclude by saying; that in consequence of the steady conduct of the marines, whether landed in foreign countries, engaged with the enemy, or on the more unpleasant duty of preventing or quelling mutiny, they have ever shewn themselves the undaunted defenders of their king and country; nor is the government insensible to their merit, or disinclined to reward it. The corps has been placed on a level with its brethren in arms, and was in 1802, styled ‘Royal;’ its facings changed from white and silver, to blue and gold.” (p. 55.)

The subsequent establishment of a Marine Artillery brought together as fine a body of men as could possibly have been found out of the inhabitants of our empire; but the arrangement recently established of making a practical gunner of every man in the ship, by the system so happily pursued on board the *Excellent*, has rendered this distinct branch of the Royal Marines unnecessary.

From the experience I have had of the importance of this corps, I have felt a conviction, that it would tend much to the national welfare and security that they should be greatly increased. I would not hesitate to say, *doubled*, if not trebled, beyond the present number. And I will support this assertion by appealing to the good sense and candour of my brother officers, military and naval, as to the real efficiency of the Marines whenever they have been called into service; whether they have not evinced an unusual degree of docility and good behaviour in the ranks, inflexible steadiness under fire, and invincible fidelity in every thing committed to their charge. With such qualifications, I confidently ask, why a very considerable portion of our foreign garrisons should not consist of marines? they would

then be available either for land or sea service; and, should a war break out, be in readiness to complete the compliments of the ships-of-war on the station, upon the arrival of recruits from home to supply their places. I can see no possible objection which could be urged against such a measure, than the consequent reduction of the troops of the line; but we are now, I hope, in every sense of the word, a "United Service," and there is ample room for all who aspire to become defenders of our country, in one corps or the other. The only question seems to be as to the measures which would most effectually promote the general interest.

We have now gone through the introductory chapters of Brenton's Naval History, and we appeal to the judicious reader how far any of the subjects they contain are irrelevant to such a work, or whether they could have been consistently omitted.

We acknowledge that chapters x. and xi., of the first volume are misplaced, as they are confined to a description of the state in which our East and West India possessions were found at the commencement of the war, in 1793, and should have been included in the introduction;

and readily admit that more than was necessary to a naval history, was said upon the subject of the Vendean war, considering its result, and yet it was wholly of a maritime description, as far as Great Britain was concerned,

Another accusation brought against Captain Brenton, is for the severity of his remarks upon living characters, or upon those of men who have recently been removed. In such a history, and with such varieties of services and characters, it would seem impossible to avoid giving offence, or preserve a claim to strict impartiality. But if he has been guilty on this head, what shall we say of his contemporaries? it would be invidious to give the instances, but the naval reader will be at no loss to discover them.

There is one passage of this description in the first volume, which we sincerely regret, and which we know was lamented by its author as an unfortunate error. I allude, of course, to the statement relative to Admiral Montagu, which arose from the coincidence of his striking his flag at a particular period. We all know how ready the public are to assign causes to events, which was the case in this instance; and the impression was further strengthened in our author's mind,

by Lord St. Vincent saying, "that the gallant Admiral had been hardly used."

But in order that full justice may be done to both parties, I would refer the reader to the preface which Captain Brenton affixed to the third volume, which was written as soon as he was convinced of his error. I trust it was received as a sincere and a satisfactory apology for the mis-statement, as well as a complete refutation of any charge against the late much respected Admiral.

This preface contains the author's apology for the insertion of the much lamented passages respecting Admiral Sir George Montagu. Much as it is to be regretted that the incautious statement should ever have been given, it must at the same time be admitted that the effect has been of sterling value to the memory of the highly respected character which it was calculated to wound, as it enabled him to publish the pamphlet which so completely exculpated him from every shade of censure or suspicion that had been excited by the accidental coincidence of the flag having been hauled down at that period; and I avail myself of this opportunity to offer my own professional opinion upon the subject, which is,

that taking into consideration the force of the French fleet, the state of the weather, which is described as beautiful, with the smoothness of the water, that the admiral in attacking a force so disproportionate to his own would have incurred the charge of unjustifiable temerity; and had the French conducted themselves with a moderate degree of resolution, there is little doubt but many of the British squadron would have been crippled. With a strong breeze, and a sea going, the case would have been very different. The little squadron might then, and undoubtedly would, have attacked the enemy in detail, with the probable result of capturing all the crippled ships, if not many of the others; but under the circumstances which occurred, there was little prospect of making an impression upon the compact line of the enemy; and it must be taken into consideration, that even dismasted ships, in tow of others, and placed at proper intervals in the line, are to all intents and purposes, in light winds and smooth water, as formidable as though they were in possession of their sails. In confirmation of this opinion, I would refer to the action between the Venerable and the French Formidable, on the

morning of the 13th of July, 1801. The latter ship had been severely crippled a week before in the action of Algeciraz, and indeed so had the Venerable; but this ship was refitted at Gibraltar, whilst the Formidable was under jury top masts. At the dawn of day these ships were seen alongside of each other with very light airs and perfectly smooth water; in the course of a short time the Venerable was completely dismasted, by the effect of superior weight of metal only; for the well established and highly merited reputation of her captain, the late Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, is a convincing proof that no skill or efforts were wanting in the Venerable. Such, in all probability, would have been the case with many of Admiral Montagu's squadron, had they attacked the French fleet with the wind and weather as described.

With regard to that passage which appears to have given particular offence, that of the general expectation manifested in Admiral Montagu's squadron of a signal to engage, we would appeal to all our brother officers, whether such an ebullition of feeling is not general throughout our fleets, squadrons, or single ships, whenever an enemy is in sight, however great the disad-

vantage under which they may be placed by disparity of force. The writer himself can give a very striking instance. When in command of the Spartan, he was chased by a French squadron, consisting of a ship of the line, two heavy frigates, and a corvette. By a partial wind one of the frigates came up with the Spartan, and opened her fire, which however was not permitted to be returned lest it might destroy the little wind which the Spartan was endeavouring to avail herself of, whilst the remainder of the enemy's squadron were bringing up the breeze astern. The officers from the main deck came aft to report that the ship's company were in a state of the highest excitement, annoyed at receiving the enemy's shot without returning it, regardless of what must have been the almost inevitable consequence—that of our capture; but they were soon pacified by seeing that their opponent had becalmed herself by firing; and the breeze reaching us, we effected our escape. Retreat, under any circumstances, however imperative, is always viewed by the British seamen with a feeling which is highly honorable to their character: hence the general, if not the invariable practice, when a ship is running from an enemy for the seamen to put a bandage over the eyes of the figure head.

I feel called upon, in again looking over this preface, to offer a remark upon the subject of the high reputation the navy has acquired in the late wars, and of the increased demand which the public will in future make upon it for energy and exertion. We must not however forget those who have gone before us, and whose brilliant examples have stimulated their posterity to deeds of glory. Especially we would hold out to the youth now rising in the service, the daring conduct of Hawke in his action with Conflans, an action which has never been exceeded in the annals of any nation, and of which we never read the details without the highest degree of admiration: his most intrepid attack upon the French fleet on their own coast, in a gale of wind, dead on shore. No action has ever exceeded this in merit, and remote as the period is at which it took place, the 20th of November never comes round without the name of Hawke receiving his tribute of respect and admiration.

Our author has also been charged with degrading the character of a profession of which he was a member, by his strictures upon some of our naval actions, which are enrolled as subjects of great triumph on the annals of our

country. But, after all, "*Le vraie est le seul beau.*" He only acted in the strict line of his duty, not only as an historian, but as an officer, by giving his honest professional opinion as to the real merits of the event he recorded; and we think we may now safely appeal to the whole profession, and indeed to the country, whether such a victory, considered under all the circumstances which attended it, as the first of June, would in these days obtain the same measure of applause as it did in 1794, or whether it would not lead to the same consequences as followed that of Sir Robert Calder, in 1805; nay, we will go farther and venture to say, that had an investigation taken place upon the former battle, none would have been called for for the latter. The action would undoubtedly have been renewed on the 24th of July. Whatever difference of opinion may now exist upon such a subject, we may depend upon it, that the view here given will be found correct at a future period.

I hope to be excused for entering at some length upon the vindication of my brother upon this subject.

In relating the conduct of the fleet on the

29th of May, in its partial encounter with the enemy, every circumstance is adverted to which can account for a general action not having been brought on, and which could place the energies of the British commander in their proper and meritorious point of view. That more was not done is attributed to the conduct of Captain Molloy, in the *Cæsar*; an assertion which was borne out by the sentence of the subsequent court martial upon that officer. As it belongs fairly to the page of history, it may be safely quoted by any writer without incurring the charge of personality. It will be observed that the author in order to insure as correct a view as possible of this memorable day, has inserted observations made from ships in different parts of the line;—viz, from the *Queen Charlotte*, *Brunswick*, and *Orion*, in the centre; and from the *Royal George*, in the rear; and with respect to Captain Brenton's own opinion, we fearlessly appeal for the soundness of it to the profession at large, and the nation in general. He says, (p. 276, vol. 1,) "we have shewn that there were after the action fifteen sail of the line ready to renew it; and we are sorry to think that the securing the prizes should have delayed or im-

peded the pursuit of the beaten and flying enemy." The consideration of taking a few old ships into port, as trophies, seems to have been an object of greater importance at that period than the final and complete destruction of the enemy; and we do entirely accord with him in the judicious observation which follows: that "the capture of a *ship of the line*, whether she arrive safe or not, should always be paid for at a certain ratio, without any deduction for repairs *of damages sustained in the action*, and the captors honorably remunerated for the loss of their prizes should it be necessary to destroy them. Had Lord Howe burnt his captured vessels and followed up his advantage, he might have completed the greatest naval campaign recorded in history. This is no speculative opinion. The facts are clear, and the most undoubted proof shall follow the assertion." The proof to which Captain Brenton refers, is derived from the following and other similar documents. Extract from the log of the Royal George. "Sunday, June 1, (2)* p.m.—In close action.—Latitude 47° 56' N.—At half-past one, ceased firing. Passed several of the enemy's ships which had

* The nautical day beginning at noon.

struck—twelve or thirteen of the enemy formed a line to leeward. Enemy towing away two or three disabled ships. We took possession of seven dismasted ships of the enemy.” But the strongest testimony we have to offer in support of Captain Brenton’s assertion, we shall take from the very highest authority, that of the commander-in-chief himself, whose official letter, as published in the London Gazette of the 11th of June, 1794, which has the following remarkable paragraph :

“In less than an hour after the close action commenced in the centre, the French Admiral, engaged by the Queen Charlotte, crowded off, and was followed by most of the ships in the van in condition to carry sail after him, *leaving us with about ten or twelve of his crippled or totally dismasted ships, exclusive of one sunk in the engagement.* The Queen Charlotte had then lost her foretopmast, and the maintopmast fell over the side soon after.

“The greater number of the other ships in the British fleet were at this time so much disabled, or widely separated, and under such circumstances with respect to those ships of the enemy in a state for action, and with which the firing was still con-

tinued, that two or three, even of their dismantled ships, attempting to get away under a spritsail singly, or smaller sail raised on the stump of the foremast, could not be detained."

We have put the whole of this most extraordinary, and, we must add, this most obscure paragraph, in italics, that the reader may give it the due attention which it deserves, and by which only it can be clearly understood. The state of the British fleet is described as "*so much disabled or widely separated,*" without any specifications of the numbers in either class, and it is added, "and under such circumstances with respect to those ships of the enemy in a state for action, and with which the firing still continued." Now, we would only ask the simple question: With whom were those ships of the enemy still engaged? The answer is obvious: With some of the British ships, of course. And could not some of those ships which were said to be widely dispersed, some of which, it is said, "had not had a rope yarn cut," with all the advantages they possessed, have collected and formed a sufficient force to have captured in detail those crippled ships of the enemy going off under their sprit-sails, "or

smaller sails set upon the *stump of the foremast.*" We require no stronger vindication than this to acquit Captain Brenton of every charge of injustice or harshness, in his account of the battle of the 1st of June. But what shall we say of the author of the life of Earl Howe—of the Secretary of the Admiralty—who, from his long continuance in that office, his means of obtaining access to every species of information, a privilege he was not likely to neglect when his object was to vindicate the character of his hero—what shall we say of his statements and admissions?*

That Captain Brenton has not been singular in his strictures on this battle, or needlessly severe, as is evident from the following extracts from Barrow's Life of Lord Howe. "It has been said, that if Lord Nelson had been in the place of Lord Howe, on the 1st of June, the probability is that not a ship of the French would have escaped—Granted;—and if Lord Howe had been fortunate enough to have had Nelson's captains and crews, which gained the battle of the Nile, the probability is equally strong that *he* would have been equally successful, for Lord Nelson only followed Lord Howe's example, in assigning

*Barrow's "Life of Earl Howe," p. 246.

to every commander his opponent; but what could Lord Nelson, or any other commander, effect, if his whole plan was deranged by the bad qualities of his ships, and the inexperience and incapacity of many of their commanders?"

Here is certainly a justification for Lord Howe, personally, but none for the battle of the 1st of June,—and the whole paragraph is an admission that Captain Brenton has not spoken so harshly of that day as his contemporaries. We must, *en passant*, notice a little error which the author of the life of Earl Howe has fallen into upon this subject. He states that Lord Nelson only followed Lord Howe's example, in assigning to every commander his opponent. This might have been Lord Nelson's first intention, but, if so, he altered it in running in, and, by throwing his whole force upon the enemy's van and part of their centre, by which means he certainly accelerated the victory of the Nile.

Again, Sir John Barrow says, p. 251,—“The prevailing opinion in the fleet certainly was, that five or six of the enemy's ships were suffered to escape, which might have been captured with ease.”* Lord Howe, however, states both in his

* Barrow's “Life of Earl Howe,” p. 251.

public letter and private journal, that the greater number of the British fleet were so much disabled, or widely separated, and under such circumstances with respect to these ships of the enemy in a state for action, and with which the firing was still continued, that two or three even of their disabled ships, attempting to get away under a spritsail singly, or a smaller sail raised on the stump of the foremast, escaped.

The reflections made by Sir J. Barrow upon this passage, are at once judicious and conclusive. He says—"It is for seamen only to decide (in which way, however, is not material for the present purpose) whether, from the above statement, fourteen of our ships, not much damaged, were more than equal to oppose themselves to nine French, capable of making an effort to protect their dismasted ships," and the four others "that went away early in the action, or, at all events, whether they were not fully equal to have prevented the *five* dismantled ships from escaping. The general impression at the time in the fleet was, that they could, and ought to have done so." Sir John then proceeds to confirm this view of the subject, by citing the opinions of five flag officers, "now alive," all of whom served in the

squadron of the 1st of June, as lieutenants. One says, "When the smoke cleared away, they had left twelve sail of their dismasted ships in our possession: five got off—some under a spritsail, and others were towed out by their small ships. We had at that time many of our line-of-battle ships with every mast and sail standing, which might and should have prevented the escape of those five dismasted ships."*

But the Secretary of the Admiralty, after describing the situation of the fleet at the close of the action, (extracted from a critical inquiry by a captain in the navy,) sums up the whole in these remarkable words: "He might have added, What confidence could Lord Howe have had in his eight seventy-fours, which had contributed little or nothing to the victory—such as *****? Was a second battle to be entrusted to such ships?"*

After these extracts, we are relieved from the task of proving that Captain Brenton, at all events, was not singular in the manner in which he qualified this battle, nor need we notice the charge brought against him by a rival—"that he laboured hard to disparage the victory of the 1st of June."

* Barrow's "Life of Earl Howe," p. 253. † *ib.* 258.

The battles of St. Vincent, Camperdown, the Nile, Copenhagen, and that great consummation of naval triumph, the battle of Trafalgar, have led the British public to look for higher results than the partial defeat of the enemy, and the capture of a few of his ships. The maxim, that "nothing is done, while any thing remains to be done," is universal; and a saying, we believe of Earl St. Vincent's, that "the word *cannot* should be expunged from the Naval Dictionary, and *try* put in twice instead of it," has passed into a proverb throughout the service. Our navy, as well as our military brethren, have learned to despise inequality of force, or strength of position. Calculations as to the expediency of renewing an action, with a defeated fleet, arising from the misconduct of officers, will no longer be tolerated. Offenders of this description would find themselves superseded, and placed under arrest, even under the fire of the enemy. Every reader of naval history must be surprised at the different views taken of two naval battles fought at periods so near to each other as the 1st of June, 1794, and that by Sir Robert Calder on the 22nd July, 1805. In the first instance, the force was equal; the result, the defeat of the

enemy, and the capture of seven of his line-of-battle ships. In the latter, the force was fifteen English to twenty combined French and Spaniards. In this case, also, the enemy was defeated, and two ships of the line taken; but how different the result! The 1st of June was hailed as a glorious victory; peerages and promotion given to the officers, and the thanks of Parliament: the 22nd of July received as a defeat; the commander-in-chief tried by a court-martial, and reprimanded for not doing more. It is far from our intention to impugn the judgment of the Court—we think it strictly correct: there could be no more doubt of it being the commander-in-chief's duty to accept the battle offered by the enemy on the 24th, as much as it was to attack them on the 22nd; but what award must the same Court have given, had their deliberations been directed to the battle of the 1st of June?

In all that has been said, either by Captain Brenton or by the writer of this work, upon the subject of the 1st of June, not the slightest intention of bringing into question the great and nobly-earned character of Lord Howe is intended, or can be implied. See page 274 of the

first volume of Brenton's "Naval History;" where, in describing Lord Howe's conduct in taking his fleet into action, he writes: "His lordship, turning to the master of the ship, said, 'I now close my signal-book, and I trust I shall have no occasion to open it to-day.' This was the language of an officer confiding in the valour of his captains, and determined, after having obtained a proper situation for commencing the action, to do his own duty, and to set an example to his followers." The opinion of Lord Howe's merits, throughout the whole course of his career, was general in his profession; and all would readily acknowledge the justice of Mr. Fox's observations, made in the House of Commons, when the motion for a vote of thanks was proposed, that "there was not a man in that house, or in the country, who had given higher satisfaction, in all his professional life, than the noble earl had."

It is to be admitted, and regretted, that invidious distinctions were made with regard to some of the captains who were engaged on the 1st of June; two of whom, particularly, had reason to feel deeply wounded at the omission of their names on the list of those who had

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done their duty : we allude to Collingwood and Domett especially. Schomberg's observations were very just upon the occasion, and we quote them from his "Naval Chronology:"

"The meritorious conduct of these officers was, no doubt, deserving of so distinguished a mark of royal favour : how far such selections may be consistent with the well-being of so important a service as that of the British Navy, in which every officer is supposed, on like occasions, to act to the best of his ability, needs no comment. If, in the presence of an enemy, or in action, a commander appears deficient either in courage or in conduct, it is more candid and decided in a commander-in-chief to have such conduct investigated before a public tribunal, rather than leave a doubt on the minds of his country, by such oblique insinuations, that some have fallen short of their duty."

We quite accord with these sentiments. It has been urged, that in the splendid campaigns of the Duke of Wellington, similar selections were made ; but upon reference to the correspondence of that most distinguished commander, it appears that the selections were made from the positions in which corps, or divisions,

or regiments were placed. The commanders of each of these within the reach of musketry were named for the honours of the day—the artillery, of course, were excepted from the rule. When an officer was omitted, a reason was assignable, as appears in many of the answers given to the appeals of those who thought themselves injured.

The account given of the intrepid and seaman-like conduct of Vice-Admiral the Honourable W. Cornwallis is well worthy of the admiration and study of naval officers; they will there see the effect of compact union, and undeviating firmness. His little squadron consisted of only five sail of the line, two frigates, and a sloop—viz., the Royal Sovereign, 110; Mars, Bellerophon, Triumph, and Brunswick, of 74 each; Phaeton, 38; Pallas, 32; and Kingfisher brig, 18. They were chased by thirteen sail of the line, fourteen frigates, and two brigs. The contemplation of events of this description is admirably calculated to shew that there is no room for despair as long as a ship is left in possession of her masts and sails, however great the disparity of force might be. The admiral would doubtless have been justified, had the Mars been taken in consequence of her falling to leeward,

had the other ships of his squadron obtained safety for themselves, under such circumstances. But Cornwallis did not for a moment hesitate; but gallantly risked the whole squadron, in his determination to save the Mars; and his decision had such an effect upon his enemies, that they would not venture in close action with him: he brought off his whole squadron in triumph, and his success was most justly appreciated as a victory.

We shall now offer a few observations on the Twenty-third of June—better known as Lord Bridport's action.

The remarks which precede the account of this action, respecting the supine state of the channel fleet, naturally have given great offence to the numerous officers serving in it, and were omitted in the second edition; but we think improperly. The charge had been made, and should either have been maintained or retracted. The statement having, however, been widely circulated in the first edition, it becomes necessary to notice it here. We do not hesitate to appeal to the officers of the navy who were in the general service of that day, whether there was not too much ground for the charge of supine-

ness? In the frigate squadrons, all was energy and activity; but not so with the ships of the line: "the team," as they were facetiously termed, employed in a monotonous and wearisome blockade of the port of Brest, having no enemy to cope with, or any thing to excite the energies of either officers or seamen, a relaxation of discipline, and a reluctance to leave these ports, had gradually been increasing. To this, Lord St. Vincent ascribed the rise of the mutiny; and when he obtained the command of the Channel Fleet, was induced, by this opinion, to the strongest measures. We do not mean to advocate the extreme to which this feeling induced him to go on the other side. It is another of the many proofs we all experience, that the reverse of wrong is not always right; but it gives satisfactory evidence that there did exist a want of activity, at this time, in the most important portion of our naval service.

The action of the 23rd of June, 1795, having been a running fight, terminated by the enemy having reached their own coast. Captain Brenton, in concluding his account of the affair, says, "This victory would have been more complete, if the commander-in-chief had not recalled the

fleet from action: there can be no danger of one three-decker following another. It is true, the coast was not so well known to our officers at that period as in the subsequent part of the war, when we were accustomed, by way of exercising our great guns, to run between Groix and the main-land."

Mr. James, in his contemporary history, says, "As soon as M. Vilaret had recovered from his surprize at the unaccountable forbearance of Lord Bridport, he called a council of war," &c. Which of these authors is most severe upon the British admiral is for their readers to judge: both evidently hint that more might have been done.

It is freely admitted, that in his account of the battle of the 14th of February, 1797, off Cape St. Vincent, the author has been too concise; and it can only be accounted for by the conflicting statements made by so many different writers, all perhaps endeavouring to supply the deficiencies, as they may have thought, of the official letter of the commander-in-chief.

It has always appeared to me, that, in the various details of this battle, the great and heroic

exertions of the few men who were enabled to bring their ships into action, were too lightly passed over, in the desire to build up Lord Nelson's fame; who was at that period so justly becoming the favourite, if not the idol, of the service. That he stood most prominent in distinction, among those most actively engaged that day, is undoubtedly true; and to him and the gallant Trowbridge and Collingwood it was chiefly owing that the Spaniards were frustrated in their attempt to regain the ships of their rear, which had been separated by the vigour and decision of the onset. That Lord Nelson's conduct was beyond all praise, upon that occasion, no one can question: his decision in wearing to assist the Culloden, and the energy with which he continued the action against the tremendous force opposed to him, has never been exceeded; but the *denouement* of capturing the 84, and the first-rate, by boarding, is better calculated for stage effect than for the sober details of history — as they were evidently beaten ships, and, as must appear even by the detail, requiring only to be taken possession of. They were beaten, it is true, by Nelson himself, among others, who had been continually engaged with

them, and others near them, for three hours before he fell on board of the *San Nicholas*. We are quite ready, also, to give Nelson the credit he so justly deserved in his gallant conduct, and say that we believe he did expect resistance when he boarded the *San Nicholas*; and that he was led to the daring attack by the hope of insuring her capture. But what we do object to is, that the merits of the day appear to be absorbed in this magnificent display of daring intrepidity. As an eye-witness of the action, the impression has ever been fixed upon our mind, that the glory of the 14th of February, in the first place, belongs to the daring chief, who brought an enemy of so overwhelming a disparity of force to action, and, in the next, to those fortunate ships who were enabled to close with their antagonists, and so nobly fulfilled the high expectation of their admiral. Those ships we do not hesitate to name, and they well deserve the distinction; they were the *Culloden*, *Prince George*, *Blenheim*, *Captain*, *Orion*, *Irresistible*, *Excellent*, and *Colossus*. The other seven were but partially engaged; but this arose from their station in the line, and their inability to reach a position in which they could find op-

ponents. The rencontre between the Victory and the Principe de Asturias was a beautiful display of decision and seamanship on the part of our commander-in-chief; but it was the only opportunity he had, in the course of the day, of producing an effect by the fire of his own ship: that upon the Salvador, which actually took place both from the Victory and Barfleur, appeared useless, although the Spanish colours were still flying, the last broadside from the Excellent having completely silenced that ship.

It was by the circumstances to which we have adverted, that we believe Captain Brenton was influenced in giving the very limited account of this splendid day, for such it was, to England, to her admiral, and her navy. We think the author perfectly justified in the encomiums he has bestowed upon it. Mr. James, on the other hand, in his account of this battle, takes a less favourable view; the success of the British fleet is, we think, rather unfairly accounted for, by placing that of the Spaniards on the very lowest scale possible as to the state of their crews. He says, —“One fact is certain, that the crews of the Spanish ships were the most worthless that can be conceived, they were composed of pressed

landsmen, and soldiers of the new levy, with about sixty, or at most eighty, seamen to each ship." Now this statement must be very questionable, when it is considered that the battle off Cape St. Vincent was the first in which the Spaniards were engaged since the peace of 1783. We are ready to admit that the Spanish navy has not, for many years, been considered a very formidable enemy, but still her seamen were much of the same description as they had been in the American war. There had been no immediate cause, that we knew of, for their deterioration, or for the diminution of their numbers; and Mr. James himself, in relating the action which took place on the preceding 13th of October, between the *Terpsichore* and *Mahonesa*, after describing the force of each ship, says—"Admitting, therefore, the *Terpsichore* to have had her full complement at quarters, we should pronounce this to be as fair a match as an English officer would wish to fight, or an English writer to record."

The same author, in speaking of the battle of St. Vincent, hints at Captain Brenton's inconsistency, who, in relating the action between the *Terpsichore* and *Mahonesa*, observes, "There is

little credit to be gained in conquering such antagonists;" and when speaking of the 14th of February, says, "From this day the old fashion of counting the enemy's fleet, and calculating disparity of force, was entirely laid aside, and a new era may be said to have commenced in the art of war at sea." It is to be recollected, that in the single action between the frigates, the force was equal, and in that of the fleets, an enormous superiority on the part of the Spaniard. This seems fully to justify the qualification in one instance, and the panegyric on the other. I believe, that what the Spaniards were under Langara, when defeated by Rodney, in 1782, and what they were in the frigate contests when the Mahonesa, Sabina, and Dorotea were taken, they were in the battle of the 14th of February.

It was a most remarkable feature in the character of Lord St. Vincent, that he was completely above the narrow feelings of jealousy by which the lustre of many great characters has been obscured. He was well aware of the efforts made to give to Nelson the chief credit for the success of this great day. No one could better appreciate the intrepidity and distinguished conduct of the commodore than the commander-in-

chief. This was manifested by his receiving him into his arms on board the *Victory* at the conclusion of the contest, and by his expressions of admiration and gratitude; and in no instance was he ever known to deny or contradict the statements evidently intended to rob him (St. Vincent) of a large portion of the glory of the day; nor do we know that he ever would allow a word to drop from him in conversation, by which the slightest question could arise upon the subject; and we believe that it was by his advice to Captain Brenton that the account of the action was so limited in his history.

Whilst engaged in writing these observations, we have accidentally received the second series of Lord Brougham's "Historical Sketches of Statesmen of the Reign of George the Third;" amongst which are the characters of Earl St. Vincent and Lord Nelson, included in the same article; and cannot resist the desire to quote a passage which so forcibly confirms the opinion we have just given: "So little effect on exalted spirits," says Lord Brougham, "have the groveling acts of little souls. He knew, all the while, how attempts had been made by Lord Nelson's flatterers, to set him up as the true hero of the

14th of February; but never, for an instant, did the feelings towards Nelson cross his mind, by which inferior natures would have been swayed. In spite of all these invidious arts, he magnanimously sent him to Aboukir, and by unparalleled exertions, which Jervis alone could make, armed him with the means of eclipsing his own fame. The mind of the historian, weary with recounting the deeds of human baseness, and mortified with contemplating the frailty of illustrious men, gathers a soothing refreshment from such scenes as these, where kindred genius, exciting only mutual admiration and honest rivalry, gives birth to no feeling of jealousy or envy, and the character which stamps real greatness is found in the genuine value and native splendour of the mass, as well as in the outward beauty of the die: the highest talents sustained by the purest virtue, the capacity of the statesman, and the valour of the hero, outshone by the magnanimous heart which beats only to the measures of generosity and justice.”*

Battle of Camperdown.

The account of this battle has been almost as

* Lord Brougham’s “Historical Sketches,” Second Series, p. 165.

concise as that of the 14th of February, and probably from a similar reason, preferring to be guided by the official details, to receiving the private accounts of officers, all equally and actively engaged. Nothing could exceed the energy and undaunted conduct of the commander-in-chief, by whose zeal and promptness of action the enemy were prevented from availing themselves of their proximity to their own shore, which could only be effected by instantly breaking their line, and getting between them and their port. "Here," says the author, "was no delay, no unnecessary manœuvres in forming lines and making dispositions. The British Admiral, to use a sea phrase, dashed at them; and, at half-past twelve at noon, cut through their line, and got between them and their own coast. No means of retreat was allowed, and a general action ensued, and, by the greatest part of the Dutch fleet, was bravely maintained."

The gallant and distinguished conduct of the admiral in the *Venerable*, and the vice-admiral in the *Monarch*, was a glorious example to the British fleet, and nobly followed, particularly by the *Bedford*, *Powerful*, *Ardent*, *Bellequeux*,

Lancaster, Triumph, and Monmouth. To these ships the glory of the day was, under Providence, chiefly attributable; but especially to the inflexible resolution of their gallant chief, who fearlessly sought and obtained a victory on a lee shore, in nine fathoms water, and in the immediate vicinity of the enemy's harbour. We may conclude, that the whole of the proceedings of this eventful day could afford but little more field for description than what has been given here, as James, with his great and laudable industry in searching through the logs of every ship in the fleet, could extract but little more information, and, in his own account, makes no reference to that of his contemporary.

Captain Brenton's summing up is, we believe, most accurate. He says, "This was one of the severest, and certainly the most decisive engagement that ever was fought between the two nations, and produced an effect upon the maritime power of Europe highly advantageous to the character and interests of the British Empire. Had the event been different, the northern powers would not have hesitated to have joined France for the purpose of our subjugation; and, to their blind revenge, would

have sacrificed their own existence. By the defeat of the Dutch fleet, on the eastern coast, the designs of the French Directory were completely disconcerted on the western side of the kingdom." (Vol. ii. p. 107.)

It has been a source of much regret that the family of Lord Duncan should have been displeased at some passage in Captain Brenton's "Naval History." We have sought in vain for it in the account of the battle of Camperdown. We can hardly imagine that the manner in which he has described the crews of the Dutch ships, as having given cause of offence. It appears to arise from a wish to do justice to a gallant enemy. It can in no manner detract from the glory of Lord Duncan, whose conduct could, under no circumstances, have been more brilliant; although it may account for the escape of a portion of the Dutch fleet, which, had they all displayed the valour evinced by the captured ships, would in all probability have accompanied them to a British port. We should rather attribute the cause of disapprobation to a paragraph respecting the unfortunate mutiny. This passage is evidently obscure, and capable of being misunderstood. It is as follows: "It

is a fact, that after the pacification of the Channel Fleet, which consisted of the largest, best manned, and what were termed the finest ships in the British Navy, that of the North Seas, deprived of such auxiliaries, might, with the exertion of a little firmness and temperate punishment, have been reduced to obedience, and the fatal consequences which ensued have been entirely prevented." (Vol. I. p. 282.)

But the very preceding paragraph would convince any reader that no censure was implied in this passage; the very circumstance being accounted for, and every justice done to the character of Lord Duncan, in these words: "But the admiral, remarkable for uniting in his own person the most undaunted courage with the most benevolent heart, forgave them upon a promise of their never repeating the offence; and it must be owned that the crew of the Venerable, by their subsequent conduct, perfectly redeemed their character." This we consider to be complete justification to Lord Duncan. Lord Duncan appears also with additional lustre by the part he took during such a period, of remaining more than three months, with merely a single ship, watching the movements of his enemies in the Texel: thus

evincing and expressing the confidence that, should the Dutch fleet put to sea, it would be the means of at once rallying round him his hitherto refractory seamen.

Battle of the Nile.

Captain Brenton says, (p. 394, vol. i. 2d. edit.) “that Nelson was named by Lord St. Vincent to command the squadron, destined to watch the motions of that fitting out at Toulon, simultaneously with Lord Spencer.” We believe the fact to be, that he was recommended by Lord St. Vincent to Lord Spencer for this purpose, as the man of all others the best qualified for the command, and the result proved the selection to be a most judicious one. The account of this action is more minute than that of any of the preceding battles; and as the contemporary historian finds but little fault with any of the statements, he could object to very little—their principal difference arises from the distances given by each of the French ships from each other—in which, it is probable, neither may be very exact. This, however, is not very important. It is evident that the account given by the Rev. Cooper Willyams, quoted by Captain Brenton, was sub-

stantially correct; not that his situation as chaplain would give him the opportunity of making very accurate personal observations, but we know that he was diligent in his endeavours to procure the most correct information, and that he had recourse to the very best authorities for the purpose of obtaining it.

The details given by Captain Brenton of the conduct of each ship, as she came into action, must be highly gratifying to the relatives of their gallant officers and crews; none are omitted, and all came in for their proper share of fame for their exertions on that glorious night. Nor was the gallant Troubridge forgotten—the heavy and trying loss of distinction which he met with upon this occasion, only called forth the remembrance of what he had formerly gained, and enabled the author to bring him before his grateful country in his true light, vindicating him from the senseless charge of despair, and adding, with peculiar felicity, “No man ever possessed himself more fully in the hour of danger than Troubridge. His ship on shore in a most perilous situation, it was the time of all others for a display of those talents he was known to possess; nor was it without the utmost exertion that he succeeded in saving his

ship, and getting her off the reef on the morning of the 2d of August, with the loss of her rudder, and discharging the incredible quantity of one hundred and twenty tons of water in one hour."

As a corroboration of the just opinion Captain Brenton had formed of this truly inestimable and highly valued officer, we quote with pleasure the following passage from Mr. James' account of this battle:

"Strictly speaking, too, only the captains that had been engaged were to have medals, but the king himself expressly authorized Lord Spencer to present one to Captain Troubridge, for his services both before and since, and for the great and wonderful exertions he had made at the time of the action, in saving and getting off his ship. Nelson's opinion of this officer may be summed up in his own energetic words, when writing to Earl St. Vincent, 'The eminent services of our friend deserve the very highest reward. I have experienced the ability and activity of his mind and body. It was Troubridge who equipped the squadron so soon at Syracuse—it was Troubridge that exerted himself for me after the action—it was Troubridge who saved the Culloden, when none that I knew in the service would have at-

tempted it—it is Troubridge I have left as myself at Naples—he is, as a friend and an officer, a nonpareil.’”—James, vol. ii., p. 187. (2d edit.)

As my intention is by no means to write a naval history, but to explain or defend any passages in the work of my late brother, against which charges have been brought, the observations I have to offer upon this glorious battle will be necessarily few, but I trust what I have said respecting the gallant and highly meritorious Troubridge, will not be deemed unreasonable. I knew him well, have sailed with him, and always viewed him as one of the very first officers of the British navy.

We have reason to know that the account of the deplorable proceedings in the Bay of Naples, which ended in the cruel execution of Prince Carracioli, gave great offence, and occasioned considerable censure being brought against Captain Brenton by those who, in their idolatry of Lord Nelson, could not be persuaded that the then fearful statements were but too well-founded. All that is necessary for his vindication upon this head, is a reference to the biography of Lord Nelson by Clark and M^rArthur, to the Naval History of James, and to the sketch of the cha-

racter of Lord Nelson by Lord Brougham. We believe that by comparing these passages with the statement made by Captain Brenton, the latter will be found far less severe than either.*

Battle of Copenhagen.

Our author is said, by his contemporary historian, to have entered upon the narrative of this day with even more than his usual conciseness. He has, however, devoted twelve pages to it, and has given a plan of the harbour of Copenhagen, with the positions of the ships on both sides, which may be received as tolerably correct, as Mr. James only objected to the stations of the *Bellona* and *Russell*, which ships grounded in running in. This chapter contains much valuable information as to the cause of this attack upon the Danish fleet and capital, with just reflections upon the consequences. The insertion of the Gazette letter in this case appears to be indispensable, and renders the narrative from any other source unnecessary. It was a beautiful trait in the character of Lord Nelson, that he was not only anxious to give the due meed of praise

* See Clarke and M^rArthur, Vol. ii. p. 184. James, Vol. ii. p. 277. Lord Brougham, Second Series, p. 171.

to those who had the happiness of distinguishing themselves under his command, but equally so to shield them from censure, where efforts to fulfil their duty had not been crowned with success. His lordship gives a very striking instance of this kindness of heart in his official letter, in which he says—"From the very intricate navigation, the *Bellona* and *Russell* unfortunately grounded; but although not in the situation assigned them, yet so placed as to be of great service. The *Agamemnon* could not weather the shoal in the middle, and was obliged to anchor; but not the smallest blame can be attached to Captain *Fancourt*, it was an event to which all the ships were liable." The summing up is peculiarly Nelsonian. "The action began at five minutes past ten; the van was led by Captain *George Murray*, of the *Edgar*, who set a noble example of intrepidity, which was so well followed up by every captain, officer, and man in the squadron."* The concluding remark by our author must be noticed—"One singularity attending this celebrated action seems to have escaped the public notice. We mean the denial (qr. withholding) any mark of royal approbation on *Nelson* and his captains.

* See *Gazette Letter*.

Rear-Admiral Graves was created a knight of the Bath—the first lieutenants of the ships in action promoted to the rank of commanders, and the usual thanks of Parliament voted, but no medals were given, or other honours conferred. We account for the omission by supposing that his Majesty, nearly allied by the ties of blood to the crown of Denmark, wished to bury the unhappy quarrel in oblivion, but Nelson, to the hour of his death, complained of the injustice done to his captains.”—Vol. iii. p. 547.

Nor was the complaint of Lord Nelson unfounded. We cannot conceive any possible reason for such a distinction. Not only our naval history, but general history would keep alive the remembrance of this great and awful event, to be deplored by both countries. The only difference between this war and any other consists in its brevity; and we should recollect that if it was begun by one man, at the head of a detached squadron, so it was carried on, and *ended* by him and his gallant followers in the course of a few short hours—a circumstance which, so far from weakening their claim to distinction, and to the honours so liberally bestowed upon our victorious countrymen upon all other occasions, appears

to have strengthened it to an irresistible degree.

It was a singular and gratifying coincidence, that the newspapers which gave the detail of the battle of Copenhagen, and were brought out to the squadron employed in the blockade of Brest, under Sir James Saumarez, also contained an account of the landing of the British army in Egypt, and its subsequent victory over the French near Alexandria. The rear-admiral directed the hands to be turned up, and both accounts to be read to them, to which they responded by long and continued cheering.

*Actions of Algeciras and the Straits of
Gibraltar.*

In reviewing my brother's account of these actions, and answering the objections brought against it by Mr. James, I feel myself placed in a situation of peculiar delicacy, from the station I occupied in the squadron: I freely acknowledge that the information on which it was founded was derived from myself, with some very slight exceptions, and that I am bound to meet the charges as they stand in the pages of the contemporary historian.

The first objection which I feel called upon to

notice is at p. 121, 3rd vol., (second edition,) in which he says: "The writer informs us that the Venerable was directed by the admiral to anchor between the batteries of Algeciras and Green Island." I pass over the sarcasm which follows, and shall merely state, that as Green Island is to the south and the batteries of Algeciras to the northward of the town, and that the French squadron lay between these extremities, it is not improbable that the admiral might have so worded his orders, although I am not aware that he did so; but if this were the case, it could only have been with a view of leaving to Captain Hood's discretion the position he should take with regard to the enemy—that the ships following him should be guided in anchoring with a view to his support. With respect to the intention of anchoring, I know that, had the wind been steady, so as to enable the ships to take up a favourable position, they would have been kept under way; but the contingency was provided for of a necessity for anchoring, and the cables were passed out of the gun-room ports in readiness. I come now to what I consider the most serious part of the charge, which is, I admit, at variance with the

defence of Captain Ferris. Mr. James says, (p. 121,) "We cannot, however, leave unnoticed the statement, that 'at about twelve o'clock, Captain Ferris hauled down his colours, and surrendered;' nor the charge against the Hannibal's captain, conveyed in these words, 'Nothing could exceed the decision and intrepidity of Captain Ferris, although the result of his manœuvre was unfortunate.' It is however due to Sir James Saumarez to state, that the squadron did not withdraw from action until the Hannibal had surrendered. A contrary assertion is made in the narrative of Captain Ferris: an unaccountable error, proving that the most correct officers may sometimes be deceived, and the more to be lamented in this instance as bearing the sanction of an official document."

To this quotation Mr. James adds:—"Our complaint against Captain Ferris is, that his account of the time which intervened between the ships driving out of the bay, and the surrender of the Hannibal, is not very clearly expressed—the Captain might, with propriety, have stated that the Hannibal did not strike her colours until nearly half-an-hour after Sir James Saumarez, from unavoidable causes undoubtedly, had dis-

continued the action, and made sail for Gibraltar. Such was the fact." Here, then, we are at issue with Mr. James. I shall confine myself in answering this passage to the statement of circumstances, of which I have a perfect recollection, having been deeply impressed upon my mind at the time, and the impression strengthened by the subsequent agitation of the question. In the first place, the circumstance of the Hannibal's colours being reversed, *was reported to me a considerable time before we discontinued the action.* It was considered as a signal of distress by the Admiral, and boats accordingly were ordered to assist her. I will next appeal to the logs of the Spencer, Audacious, and Venerable, as to the period at which the Hannibal struck.*

But the clear and decided testimony of another eye-witness—of one personally engaged, and involved in the fate of the Hannibal—must be irresistible. Col. Connolly, of the Royal Marines, then acting as captain of marines on board the Hannibal, when asked whether the enemy took possession of the Hannibal before her colours were hoisted union downwards, answers—

"The colours were hauled down by Captain

"Ross's "Life of Lord de Saumarez." Vol. i. p. 373.

Ferris' orders, and remained so, but being so near the *Formidable*, the captain of her was on board in five minutes after we had struck, *and the colours were hoisted union downwards by the Frenchman.*"

He was then asked—"Were the colours hoisted union down *by the enemy*, or at any time by Captain Ferris' orders?"

Ans.—"*By the enemy.*"

Quest. 3d.—"Did the boats (of the British squadron) come *before*, or *after* the colours were hoisted union downwards, to render her assistance?"

Ans.—"*The boats from our ships did not get near us till after we were in possession of the enemy, and I called on an old shipmate of mine in the Venerable's barge, and told him so as he came under the starboard quarter, but he persisted in coming on board, and was taken.*"

I think I have now proved that in the account given by Captain Brenton of this action, he had at least good authority for the statements impugned by Mr. James; and I shall conclude my own share of this controversy by asking this simple question, arising out of the defence made by Captain Ferris, in which he says: "About twelve

o'clock our ships were all out of gun-shot of the enemy, and we had the fire of the whole French squadron, batteries, and gunboats to contend with *alone*, against which we continued to keep up as brisk a fire as could be expected, even by men in the most sanguine expectation of victory, until near two o'clock."

It is acknowledged on all hands that Sir James Saumarez ordered the boats of the squadron to assist the *Hannibal*, *in consequence of her colours being reversed*, and this while he, with all the rest of the squadron, with the exception of the *Pompeè*, were still in action with the enemy. Now if, according to Captain Ferris, the ships were all out of gun-shot about twelve, and he did not strike till near two, what became of these boats? Did they remain nearly two hours under the enemy's guns, after their own ships had retreated to Gibraltar, *and only get alongside the Hannibal after she was taken possession of by the enemy?* That they were captured alongside the *Hannibal* is evident from Colonel Connolly's evidence, who warned the officer of the Venerable's barge, that they were in possession of the French, but not hearing the warning, *was made prisoner, with his boat's crew.*

Mr. James next proceeds to invalidate Captain Brenton's statement, that Lenois refused in the first instance to agree to an exchange of prisoners. This however is a fact. I went over with a flag of truce the day after the action to make the proposal, which Lenois refused, alleging that he must wait the return of the messenger which he had despatched to Paris as soon as the last gun had been fired on the preceding day. Mr. James concludes his doubting paragraph by saying—"At all events, both Captain Ferris and Lord Cochrane, with their respective officers, the sole object we believe of Captain Jahleel Brenton's mission, were in England in the month of August." To this I reply, that the personal comfort of Captain Ferris, Lord Cochrane, and their officers, Sir James Saumarez had undoubtedly much at heart; but the great object was to procure an exchange of prisoners, that he might make up for the heavy loss in killed and wounded, by distributing among the ships of the squadron the crews of the Hannibal and Speedy. Admiral Lenois, although he refused to listen to the proposal of an exchange, the next day sent over all the officers on parole, knowing that they could not serve until regularly exchanged. After,

however, the second action on the 12th of July, when he was anxious to get back the Frenchmen taken in the St. Antoine, he volunteered a cartel for the purpose himself, although his messenger could not have returned from Paris.

Having now touched upon the principal points of difference between the historians, and endeavoured to shew, that Captain Brenton, if in error, was at all events deceived himself by what he considered as good authority, I shall conclude my observations upon this part of the naval history. But as I have been unfortunately obliged to come forward in a much more prominent way than I could have wished upon this occasion, it may be as well to dispose of the subjects in which I am personally concerned at once, without any further reference to them. The gallant officer who has edited the second edition of James' "Naval History," has made a few observations respecting the situation of the Gibraltar upon the Pearl Rock in the following words: "Mr. James says the mainsail was set, and Sir Jahleel (the first Lieutenant of the ship at the time) declares it was not set." I have no fault to find with the manner in which this statement is made. It is in the conciliatory tone of gentlemanly feelings,

and as such I wish to receive it. I will therefore proceed to explain to the gallant editor what he will at once understand—that the order to set the mainsail was recorded by the master's mate, who, having heard it given, inserted it in the log, without taking the trouble to ascertain whether the tack was on board, or the sheet aft. It is not saying too much, to assert that the first lieutenant of the ship was better authority upon this subject than the mate of the watch. We trust this statement will satisfy the gallant editor as to this particular circumstance; but before we quit the subject, we have to notice the passage in James's second edition, in which he condemns with some severity an expression used by Captain Brenton in this account of the Gibraltar, viz:—"that the crew assembled on the deck, and testified by their *screams* and actions every symptom of despair." We quite agree that the word objected to was ill chosen, and that Mr. James wrote his account of the loss of the Amazon in better taste in this respect. He says, "She struck. *Shrieks* issued from every part of the ship, and all was horror and dismay." We concede the greater propriety of the word chosen by Mr. James, but can see no reason,

why in one case, the conduct of the people should be described as more characteristic of timid females than of British seamen, and that in the other no such idea should present itself.”*

Once more, and to conclude this subject. Captain Chamier says in his preface, (page xxxii :) “But there is one question in James which Captain Brenton has not answered, and which, with his permission, we will put again. The Pearl Rock, on which Sir Jahleel asserts the Gibraltar struck, lies about a mile and a half due south, and Cape Malabata, the N. E. point of Tangier Bay, on the opposite side of the strait, about 22 miles S. W. of Cabrita Point, how then, with the wind at E. S. E. could the Gibraltar want to weather Cabrita Point to get into Tangier Bay?” We are not at all surprised at Mr. James putting such a question, but very much so at the naval editor repeating it, which he would not have done had he taken the trouble to look over the chart of the Bay of Gibraltar, to have observed the *bearings*, and particularly the *distance* from the Gibraltar’s position in Rosea Bay to the Pearl Rock. It must also be taken into consideration that the Gibraltar drove from

*James, Vol. iii. p. 14. (2nd edit.)

her station with two anchors hanging from her bows, with a whole cable upon each, and soon after the sheet anchor added to these at the end of its whole range: that some time elapsed before the Captain could decide upon cutting the cables, and causing sail to be made upon the ship; and that when the order was given for this purpose, the topsails having been furled with only two reefs in, it was necessary to close reef them; and that the wind blowing a hurricane at this time, the sails were split as they fell from the yards, whilst the ship was lying in the trough of the sea, and driving rapidly over to the Spanish shore. We think that had the gallant officer commanded a ship under such circumstances, and known that there was a rock on his lee bow, and but a short distance from him, he would have felt at once, without being prompted to put the question by a landman, why the Gibraltar could want to weather Cabrita Point, putting Tangier Bay and Cape Malabata out of the question. Nor did any intention exist of running the Gibraltar into that Bay, the object being solely to get her into the fair way of the straits. Mr. James appears even to doubt, and his editor to sanction the opinion that the Gibraltar did not

strike upon the Pearl Rock, but upon a *bank* off Cabrita Point. One glance at the chart would satisfy any reader as to this question. As I sent Captain Brenton my account of this almost miraculous escape, which he has published verbatim in his reply to James's statement, in page 20, in the first volume of his second edition, I beg to refer the reader to it for the more minute particulars.

Battle of Trafalgar.

Our author's account of this battle is only objected to by his contemporary on account of its brevity, but we hope that question is disposed of by what has already been said upon the subject; and Mr. James appears to have received this part of the history with more indulgence than usual. He has even quoted a passage from it with apparent approbation, that in which the glorious career of Nelson is summed up with peculiar force and energy. We will give it in Captain Brenton's own words.

"We have seen him as Captain of the *Agamemnon*, writing his despatches while his ship lay aground in an enemy's port. We have seen him as captain of a 74 gun ship on the 14th of

February, lay a Spanish first-rate, and an 84 gun ship on board, and take them both. Equally great in the hour of defeat as in victory, see him at Teneriffe with his shattered arm going to the rescue of his companions, and saving their lives, while every moment of delay increased the peril of his own by hemorrhage and exhaustion. See him walk up the ship's side; hear him command the surgeon to proceed to amputation; and see the fortitude with which he bore the agonizing pain. Follow him to the Nile, and contemplate the destruction of the fleet of France, and the consequent loss of her vast army by Buonaparte. How great was his professional knowledge and decision at Copenhagen, when, despising death, he refused to obey the signal of recal, because he knew that by such obedience his country would have been disgraced, the great object of the expedition frustrated, and Britain, overpowered by the increased energy of the northern confederacy, might have sunk under the multiplied force of her enemies. See him on the same occasion sit down in the midst of carnage, and address a letter to the Crown Prince of Denmark, which, while it gave victory to his country, added to her glory by stopping the useless effusion of

human blood. We have seen him the patient, watchful, and anxious guardian of our honour in the Mediteranean, when for two years, he sought an opportunity to engage an enemy of superior force. Three times we have seen him pursue (go in quest of) the foes of his country to Egypt, and once to the West Indies; and these steps he took entirely on his own responsibility, disregarding any personal consideration, any calculation of force, or any allurements of gain. Coming at last to the termination of his glorious career, the end of his life was worthy of all his other deeds. The battle of Trafalgar will stand, without the aid of sculpture or painting, the greatest memorial British naval valour ever exhibited. No pen can do justice to—no description can convey an adequate idea of—the glories of that day; and the event which deprived us of our favourite chief, consummated his earthly fame, and rendered his name for ever dear to his country. Had not his transcendent virtues (qr. abilities) been shaded by a fault, we might have been accused of flattery. No human being was ever perfect; and however we may regret the blemish in the affair of Carracioli, we must ever acknowledge that the character of Nelson, as a public

servant, is not exceeded in the history of the world."

Dardanelles.

We feel called upon to make a few observations, and they shall be but few, upon the subject of the British squadron passing the Dardanelles, under Vice Admiral Sir John Duckworth. This we feel compelled upon to do, not only in vindication of Captain Brenton, who, Mr. James says, "never wilfully misses an opportunity of bepraising," (Sir John Duckworth), as well as appealing to the profession at large in behalf of that highly gallant and distinguished admiral, whose memory has been, we consider, hardly dealt with. In relieving Captain Brenton from the charge of partiality, we believe we might say, with correctness, that he never met with Sir John Duckworth in the whole course of his service in the navy—that he certainly never was under his command, or in a situation to meet even with favour or patronage from him. Our own opinion has always been, that had Sir John Duckworth attacked Constantinople, he would have met with a most serious repulse, and rendered his ultimate retreat from the Darda-

nelles a matter of great difficulty and danger to his squadron. Mr. James himself in detailing the circumstance which actually occurred to the squadron in repassing the heavy batteries in these straits, shews what the consequences might have been, had the ships been in a crippled state; and perfectly justifies the statement of Captain Brenton, who, in comparing the force under Sir John Duckworth with that sent against Copenhagen under Lord Gambier, at once accounts for the different results. But whoever reads with attention those passages relating to the conduct of Sir John Duckworth, wherever it has been the subject of Mr. James's observation, will at once perceive that he did not come to this part of his history with an unprejudiced feeling; and that instead of the admiral "preparing a cushion for his fall," the historian was endeavouring to prepare his reader beforehand for a sentence of condemnation. I beg leave to offer a few observations upon the subject, which although not immediately connected with the object I have in view, that of answering charges made against Brenton's "Naval History," may be excused when given in behalf of a distinguished but deceased brother officer and friend.

At page 188 of the third volume of James's "Naval History," 2nd edit., he describes a chase after a French squadron of five sail of the line, and smaller vessels, on the 25th of December, 1806, by that commanded by Sir John Duckworth, consisting of six of the line, and two frigates. He says, "The chase continued with increased advantage to the British until one P.M., when the relative distances of the ships, according to the mean calculations of the two headmost British ships, were as follow—French sternmost ship from Superb about seven miles, Spencer astern of Superb about four miles, and Amethyst frigate rather nearer—Agamemnon about five miles astern of Spencer, and hull down to Superb—Acasta frigate, and Powerful 74, about twenty-two miles from Spencer, and out of sight from Superb—and Canopus and Donegal out of sight both of Spencer and Superb;—according to the statement of a contemporary, the computed distance between the Superb and the sternmost ship of her squadron, which we take to have been the Donegal, was, by meridian observation, about forty-five miles."

Without impugning or questioning this statement, Mr. James proceeds to animadvert, with

great severity, upon the signal made by Sir John Duckworth for discontinuing the chase. He says—"In July 1801, without waiting for friends, the *Superb* dashed alone among the rearmost ships (two of them three deckers,) of the enemy's fleet, but Captain Keats was then the first, not the second officer in command of her." But how differently was the *Superb* placed on this day—instead of the British ships being so separated as to be at the distance from each other of four, nine, twenty-six, and forty-five miles astern of the Admiral, there could scarcely have been four miles between any part of the squadron under Sir James Saumarez. Mr. James says, "that to the joy of M. Willaumez, and to the surprise and, of course, the regret of such of the British ships as could see it, Sir John directed a signal to be hoisted annulling the chase." We should, on the contrary, suppose that M. Willaumez must have been greatly disappointed with the signal, as by the time the *Superb* could have got alongside of his sternmost ship, she must have so greatly increased the distance between the ships of the British squadron, as to render it almost a certain event that she must have been crippled by the united fire of

the whole French squadron, and that the Spencer must have shared the same fate in coming to her support—at least we cannot conceive a more favourable position for a retreating squadron to be placed than that of M. Willaumez's on this occasion. We do not believe that Lord Nelson himself would have persevered in attacking the enemy under such circumstances.

The same feeling of prejudice is manifest in the account of Sir John Duckworth's action off St. Domingo, although he appears to have done all that a brave, and zealous, and talented officer could have done. Mr. James himself allows that the disparity of force was rather nominal than real, that the British squadron exceeded that of the French in number of vessels, rather than amount of force, and in smooth water the advantage of heavy metal is much increased by the concentration of fire from a three-decker. Sir John Duckworth took or destroyed the whole of the line of battle ships of the enemy. He could not be expected to prevent them from running on shore, with the land at a distance of only a mile from them, nor could he prevent the escape of the frigates whilst engaged with the ships of the line. Why then should Mr. James labour so

hard to disparage this action, and to indulge in such sarcastic remarks upon an officer whose whole professional life had obtained for him the respect and approbation of the service, and who never lost an opportunity of distinguishing himself in action with the enemy.

We can confidently appeal to the reader of Brenton's Naval History, whether, in his account of the chase on the 25th December, 1805, or in the action of the 6th February, 1806, he has not given a fair, a manly, and an intelligent account of both events—free from the slightest imputation of partiality or prejudice, and at once honourable to the officers concerned, as well as creditable to the zeal, the perseverance, and the valour of the squadron.

We are very sorry to observe the same spirit of sarcasm evinced towards another distinguished and highly respected officer, Sir John Warren. We think the indulgence of such feelings quite derogatory to the dignity of history; and that where an officer has attained high rank, and passed a long course of service, with great credit to himself and to his profession, receiving distinguished marks of approbation from his sovereign and his

country, his name may be permitted to descend to posterity, unassailed by party feeling, or private pique. We can confidently assert, that throughout the whole of Brenton's Naval History, no such attacks have been made. When censured for the manner in which he had spoken of a gallant and distinguished officer, Admiral Sir George Montagu, he was no sooner convinced of his error, than he did all that an honourable man could do, to acknowledge and regret it, explaining the circumstances under which it originated.

It will be observed that the observations I have made, with a view to vindicate my brother's Naval History, have been mostly confined to the general actions. It is not that the account of single actions are not fairly belonging to such a work, or that any of them have been neglected, even when fought between sloops of war, or even smaller vessels. The encounters also between boats, and the many gallant achievements in cutting out vessels from the enemies' ports, were also recorded, when the account of such affairs reached the author, and justice done to the gallant officers and men by whom they were achieved. The sources of information from which these were to be obtained were necessarily limited, and often

the accounts themselves too questionable for insertion, unless the official account was inserted in the Gazette by Admiralty order. We believe that it was the general system with that board, that unless a capture was made, no letter was published.

I have now endeavoured to pass in review the prominent features of Brenton's Naval History—that it is not without faults and errors, I freely admit; but my object has been to vindicate the writer from the charges made against him, of presumption in undertaking such a work, and of uncalled for harshness and severity in the execution of it. I considered it most important to my brother's memory, that I should endeavour at least to meet and answer the censures which has been brought against him. I trust I have done so in kindness and caution; whether successfully or not, it is for the public to judge. The work and the criticisms are before them, and I cheerfully appeal to the deliberate judgment of the reader. I feel confident that I shall be acquitted of any intention of depreciating the reputation of the profession in which I have passed so many years. My object has been to remove the

false glare which has been thrown over some of the events recorded, which, if suffered to remain, would only tend to throw suspicion over others, and induce the rising generations to form an erroneous estimate of what is required to constitute a real triumph.

LIFE
OF
THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT.

THERE is no doubt that Captain Brenton felt greatly distressed at the manner in which the Life of the Earl of St. Vincent was commented upon in the Quarterly Review. — This, however, is an ordeal which every author must pass through, whose works are of sufficient importance to furnish subject for an article, nor could we wish it to be otherwise. By such a test the press is protected from much that might be injurious, and valuable works are brought to public notice. The criticism should be received as coming from the guardians of our literature; but, as it is justly observed, “that from the sublime to the ridiculous there is but a step,” men of powerful minds, with serious and important objects in view, will often

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stoop to the latter, indifferent as to the pain they may inflict, provided they can make the reader laugh. We have no intention of craving mercy, or deprecating censure, but as the work in question, and the review are both before the public, feel it a duty to offer such observations as may tend to the justification of the author.

As to the writer of the article in the Review, it is of little importance who or what he may be. It is probable that party, more than personality, has influenced his feelings. It is to be wished that Captain Brenton had left him to enjoy his concealment. The world is sufficiently skilful in detecting such disguises, although it may frequently err in its surmises.

We feel more sorrow than anger, when we read the opening of this article in the Quarterly Review.* It begins with an uncalled for asperity, by which the animus of the writer is declared, and condemnation anticipated before the subject is brought before the reader, and must lead to a conviction that a latent hostility had long been cherished towards Captain Brenton's Naval History, although not manifested; that the object of the reviewer was to crush both works, if possible,

* See page 14.

at one blow. The opinion volunteered by the writer, that Captain Brenton had but little experience as an officer in the rank he held, might, or might not, be well-founded—if it were, then certainly some reason should have been assigned for his assertion. An almost uninterrupted servitude of twenty-seven years, with plain good sense, and zealous exertion, would undoubtedly establish Captain Brenton's claim to a fair share of experience in common with his brother officers, and he never assumed more. But the sarcastic remark which follows must not be entirely passed by, because it is due to Captain Brenton's memory and his character, to appeal to the reader of his works, whether he ever "put forth any of his good deeds."* We look in vain for even a solitary instance, and those circumstances where he received the approbation of his superiors, and was rewarded by promotion for his gallantry, would be unknown, but for the pages of a contemporary historian. The admission of his being an honourable man, and of unimpeachable moral character, we receive as his due, but see no reason why his professional qualifications should not have been as readily conceded, for he never

* Quarterly Review, Vol. lxii. p. 424.

lost any opportunity of distinguishing himself as a good and gallant officer.

The reviewer is evidently much pleased with the narrative dictated by Lord St. Vincent, which appears at the outset of the work, but is rather hard upon the author for not going on with the same minute account of the remainder of his career in the subordinate grades of the service. He would gladly have done so, undoubtedly, had the means been afforded him; but as they were not, he was obliged to proceed to those passages in the life of his hero, in which he found any thing to record. The following paragraph would therefore appear to be more the result of captious disappointment, than a reasonable objection. "We may ask then," says the reviewer, "if Captain Brenton has traced the progress of young Jervis in and from the Gloucester, where the auto-biographer left him, through the grades of able seaman, midshipman, lieutenant, and commander, until made captain—the stages in which the foundation must be laid for future fortunes. No such thing. He hurries away, not by a regular progressive flood, but with the rapidity of what sailors call rollers, in one short paragraph of a few lines, and places, *per saltem*, our young coun-

try lad, with his wide sleeved coat reaching to his heels, on the list of post captains."

We know not whether the historian to whom we are indebted for the lives of Anson and Howe, has had the same reviewer to pronounce upon the merits of his works, but they have undoubtedly met with much more favour; the early years, and cockpit life of each of these great men, has been passed over nearly as summarily as that of St. Vincent, nor do we find either of them placed in a very prominent point of view, until they also had made their leap, and got upon the post list. We are quite sure that Captain Brenton would have thankfully received, and gladly inserted the interesting detail given by the reviewer in his 428th page, had it come to his knowledge well authenticated: that it did not, was rather his misfortune than his fault.

The charge contained in the same page, of the omission of an important scene, in which Sir John Jervis was engaged, viz., the relief of Gibraltar under Lord Howe, is accounted for by Captain Brenton himself, having sent the memorandum relating to it to Sir John Barrow, who was at that time writing the life of Earl Howe, and to whom he thought such a document might be useful and acceptable.

From this paragraph the Life of Earl St. Vincent is allowed to run on very smoothly, without much comment or censure, till the mutiny—that fearful event, which brought into their strong and intense light, the great and sterling abilities of the noble earl. The relation of its commencement on board the *Kingsfisher*, I believe to be strictly true; but this, at all events, is capable of proof, by a reference to the minutes of the court-martial to which it led. Whether the anecdote respecting the “toast” be equally so, it is not in my power to determine; but I candidly acknowledge to have given it to Captain Brenton. I was an officer in Lord St. Vincent’s fleet at the time; the story was current in the different ships, was frequently the subject of conversation, and I never remember to have heard it doubted: my own conviction is that it is true, but in a modified form—that the earl, duly appreciating the decision by which Captain Maitland quelled the first appearance of mutiny, did actually drink his health, and that in the presence of many, if not all, the members of the court-martial. I can well remember the confidence with which the conduct of our noble admiral, under the awful circumstances in which he, and indeed the whole

kingdom, was placed, inspired those under his command, and the cheerful obedience with which his orders were obeyed.

The next question which seems to require the advocacy of Captain Brenton's friends, is a charge brought against him by the reviewer, in the following terms—"We hinted at Mr. Brenton's want of judgment and discretion. We cannot give a stronger proof of it than the foisting into his narrative here, a whole chapter, of about thirty pages, of vituperation against Collingwood's letters. That these letters occasionally exhibit this great officer as peevish and garrulous, we fully agree; but, as regards the writer, these letters were never meant to be seen by any but his own family and intimate friends; and, as regards his editor, we ought to reflect that truth is, after all, a prize for which we may be content to pay something.

"Mr. Newnham Collingwood has enabled us to understand what the shades, as well as the lights, of his hero's character and history were; and even if he has sometimes given us more of the dark than was called for, nobody could have been less entitled to sit as his judge than the present author. If now and then a passage occurs giving pain to

some individual or individuals, we are sorry that it should be so, yet we are constrained to ask how such occurrences can be altogether avoided, in drawing up any thing like a complete narrative of a great man's active life, soon after the period of his decease. Men are made of flesh and blood, not of alabaster. And then what a golden part of its use and benefit does biography lose, if it will give us no intimation how the hero was tried and plagued by the conceit and obstinacy of others; or stating merely the grand results, places similar success almost out of our imagination, by refusing to let us see that they were attained in spite of weaknesses, such as we feel in ourselves, and may, if not disheartened for the attempt, in like manner, each in his own sphere, overcome."

Surely if this is a defence for Mr. Newnham Collingwood, and we freely admit it to be so, Captain Brenton should have an equal share of benefit from the maxim. We should have viewed the whole of this paragraph as written in justification of Captain Brenton, instead of being given as a strong proof of his want of judgment and discretion—and so much for the thirty pages of vituperation, none of which would have been

called forth, but for the ill-advised publication of these very letters, or rather the imprudent selection of them. We would refer our readers to the letters themselves, and request their attentive perusal, as well as of the thirty pages which have given so much offence to the reviewer of the *Life of St. Vincent*. They will readily admit that it was natural for Captain Brenton to protect his hero from the shade endeavoured to be cast over him, by the fabric raised to the glory of another. I have always admired Lord Collingwood, and respected him for his devotion to the service, of which he was a distinguished ornament; and, with the reviewer, regret that what was written for relatives and private friends, should have found its way into the public press, after which collision seems unavoidable. Both these great men occasionally manifested, in the performance of their official duties, a degree of eccentricity and peculiar mode of action, which could not fail to excite unpleasant feelings in their subordinates. But they have both passed off the stage of life—may the memory of each remain embalmed in the gratitude of their country, and their faults and their jarring be for ever forgotten.

But to show that Captain Brenton shared in that general respect and even admiration which the character of Lord Collingwood so deservedly met with, both in and out of his profession, I will extract a few passages from the memoranda, found amongst his papers, and evidently written about the same period as the observations above-mentioned.

In speaking of this very work, Lord Collingwood's letters, he says—"The letter to Mr. Lane should, in our humble opinion, be printed and distributed gratis to every young man about to enter the naval service. The admiral's account of the 1st of June is one of the clearest and most authentic documents we ever met on a similar subject. We can follow the gallant officer—see with his glass—and almost fancy we hear his guns; it leaves the vapid and unsatisfactory narrative of Lord Howe far in the shade, and tells us who was who on that day; at the same time, with singular tact and delicacy, he has not said one word of those who might have done more. Why Collingwood's name was omitted in the despatches of this day, we are yet to learn; but justice, on this occasion, seems to have been wrested by force from the unwilling hands of

government—they were driven to shame by his meekness, and relieved by his daring intrepidity in the battle of the 14th of February, 1797. His account of that glorious day has added to its glory, by the clear, modest, and masterly manner in which he describes a sea-fight, which, of all worldly transactions, is the most difficult to describe. The medal here could not be withheld—the voices of the British and Spanish fleets gave it to him—and that for the 1st of June was presented at the same time, for Collingwood declared, that he would have both or none: he had done his duty equally under Lord Howe as he had done under Sir John Jervis. He could not help feeling almost a spiteful satisfaction (p. 32) that Lord Howe's victory was out-done. And certainly it was—Sir John Jervis, who on that day gained the title of Earl St. Vincent, was the first officer who had dared to attack a fleet of double his force.

“The suppression of the mutiny, however, was a far more brilliant gem in the coronet of Earl St. Vincent than even his capture of four sail of the line out of twenty-seven, with a fleet of fifteen; and while the *fortiter in re* of the chief subdued the daring ring-leaders to submission,

the amiable and quiet Collingwood led the minor spirits with a hair. The odious cat-o'-nine-tails he seldom used, but like Prospero, with his wand, he charmed the turbulent spirits of the deep. Corporal punishment, no doubt, is necessary, and cannot be dispensed with; but no man ever fought more, or did more with his ship, and used it less. He proved that such a system of discipline was an art to be acquired, and he leaves many of the officers of his own time to regret that they did not attain this perfection of the master spirit. The regulations of the Admiralty upon this head have gone a long way to remedy this evil, but Collingwood laid the axe at the root of the tree, and it is impossible to say how much the country may be indebted to him for his prudence and humanity."

I believe, and it is but justice to the memory of this distinguished chief to mention it here, that the present excellent regulations for restricting punishment in the navy, within proper limits, and laying the full weight of responsibility upon the captain by whose authority it is inflicted, originated with Lord Collingwood, who, in consequence of undue severity having been exercised by the commander of a sloop of war, made such

representations to the Admiralty as gave rise to the present salutary regulations. But having given the noble and gallant lord that credit for his courage, talents, and discipline which is so justly his due, Captain Brenton proceeds to shew another qualification he possessed, scarcely inferior in value to the others in a great naval commander—the strict and watchful economy over the stores supplied to his fleet. He says: “His economy in naval stores was another military virtue which he brought into fashion. Admiral Cornwallis, it is true, went before him in this branch of management; but carried it to such an excess as to endanger the lives of his men and the safety of his ships.” An instance he gives of Lord Collingwood’s economy is at once an original and an amusing one. Alluding to some proverbial saying, that when a man is going to fight a duel, he should put on an old coat, quite good enough to make a hole in,—Collingwood applied this to his ship at the battle of the 14th of Feb., when he condoled with his boatswain (poor Peter Peffers) on their mutual forgetfulness to bend an old foretopsail to fight in: “They will quite ruin the new one.”

Of the great and crowning act of Lord Col-

lingwood's professional life, we find the following observations amongst those MS. of Captain Brenton's:

"The history of the battle of Trafalgar is now almost worn thread-bare. We have had it served up in as many shapes as it is said a French cook can dress an egg; but we can never tire of such short and pithy passages as those in pp. 112, *et seq.* I never could read them without feeling what the ladies call, 'an egg in the throat,' *i. e.* a certain inclination to cry."

Our author next proceeds to vindicate Lord Collingwood's memory from a charge which had been brought against him for disregarding the dying injunctions of his friend, Lord Nelson, in not anchoring the fleet, and says, "Mr. Collingwood has amply and abundantly rescued the memory of his noble relative from this charge, preferred against him by a landsman; but it appears to us that the world has been generally under a mistake as to the last words of Nelson, who, when he desired Hardy to anchor, knew that there was little wind, and smooth water. Under these circumstances, to have anchored, and collected the scattered ships, would have been prudent; but very soon after, the case was

entirely altered: the wind increased, the sea got up, the ships' cables were found to be shot away—the wind backed to the S.S.W., and offered a prospect of weathering the land with the disabled ships and prizes in tow. This was, therefore, not to be disregarded, and Collingwood, who saw with a seaman's eye, gladly seized the occasion. Many ships, however, were compelled to anchor, and, as by way of experiment, soon proved the impossibility of riding out the gale in the disasters which followed each other in such rapid succession. Cables parted, rudders unshipped, and wrecks on the coast in all directions, afforded our officers an opportunity of displaying as much seamanship and humanity to save as they had shewn courage and ardour in vanquishing their enemy."

In another part of these memoranda, we find the following passage:

"Lord Collingwood was grieved that he did not accompany his friend, Nelson, to the Nile. He took it ill of Lord St. Vincent; but he forgot that his being kept off Cadiz, with the admiral, who knew and valued his character, was perhaps as great a compliment as could have been paid him. The fortune of war cer-

tainly threw him out of that great action; but no one was to blame for this.”

It was with great satisfaction that I discovered the papers from which these extracts are taken. They shew the real estimate which my brother had formed of Lord Collingwood’s character; nor would any of the remarks which have called forth the reviewer’s animadversions have been made, but for the unfortunate—not to say injudicious and indiscriminate—publication of private letters, where sentiments were expressed respecting the conduct of Earl St. Vincent in command, which appeared to the writer of his life as calling for notice and vindication. But we repeat our entreaty, that the reader would turn to these pages, and judge for himself how far they are inconsistent with these extracts, as calculated to detract from the great and sterling merits of Lord Collingwood.

It has been said that Captain Brenton wrote the Life of Earl St. Vincent not only without the sanction, but against the wishes, of his relatives. Now, let us hear what he says upon the subject himself:

“When I accompanied Lord St. Vincent to the south of France, I asked him whether he

would approve of my writing his life, if I should survive him. He replied, 'I am very much obliged to you; but Tucker is to do it.' From that moment I gave up all thoughts of the present undertaking, and only published such letters in the Naval History as I deemed pertinent to the subject in hand; nor did I contemplate ever doing more, until I found, that if I did not, the public would probably be deprived altogether of an authentic biography of my distinguished friend.

"About seven years after the death of the earl, I received a letter from Viscount St. Vincent, requesting me to lend him my papers for the purpose of getting the life of his uncle written. To this request I immediately assented, and forwarded to the viscount every letter I had ever copied, together with all my papers, private memorandum-books, and even the papers relative to the Chancery suit. I also made, at the same time, an unconditional offer of the use of the plate engraved by Turner, from the picture of the earl by Carbennier.

"After this statement, I shall scarcely be accused of selfish motives in refusing to part with the documents in question in the first instance.

In fact, though I refused to part with the letters when they were attempted to be wrested from me by force, I gave them up without hesitation to a gentlemanly request, and a promise that they should be returned when applied to the purpose for which I had intended them.

“The lapse of another seven years took place; no life of the earl appeared; and Tucker was dead. In the mean time, I heard that Lord Brougham was entrusted with the work, and I therefore wrote to his lordship, requesting to know if he had any intention of proceeding with it; adding, that if he had no intention of doing so, I should certainly take the work in hand myself. His lordship’s answer was kind and candid. He admitted that it had been his intention to write the life of the earl, but that circumstances had hitherto prevented it; that he had not wholly relinquished the idea of writing it, but begged he might not prevent my doing it; and he concluded by expressing a wish that I should not hurry it, as I had mentioned my intention of bringing it out in six months from the date of my letter. About the same time, I wrote to the Viscount St. Vincent, requesting to have my papers returned to me, which his

lordship did with as little delay as possible. Having thus regained possession of the most material documents connected with my purpose, I prepared, in good earnest, to go to work; but before I actually commenced the life, I addressed a second letter to Lord Brougham, which I myself left at his house in Berkeley Square. In that letter I distinctly stated, that if his lordship would say he had any intention of writing the life of the Earl of St. Vincent, I would wholly abandon my intention of doing so.

“To this last letter I never received any answer. Having thus, as I considered, done all which delicacy and honour required of me, I undertook to write the life of the Earl of St. Vincent, under the firm conviction that, in default of my doing so, his character and actions, and the influence which they exercised on the condition and history of his profession and his country, would remain unrecorded.”

In corroboration of this statement, I have myself frequently, during the lapse of the fourteen years above mentioned, urged my valued friend, Mr. Jedidiah Tucker, after the death of his lamented and respected father, to bring out the history of the life of the Earl St. Vincent,

urging the importance of its being done while there were so many witnesses living who could testify to his great actions, and still greater qualities; and I can confidently appeal to him as to the earnestness with which I frequently repeated the request.

With regard to that part of the charge—asserting that the work was written by Captain Brenton, “against the wishes of the relatives”—the following extract from a letter from Viscount St. Vincent will effectually exonerate him:

* * * * * “I am truly sorry to find that the kind loan of your MSS. has not led to the fulfilment, as I hoped it would, of the late earl’s instructions. I shall write by this post to Mr. Tucker, as the executor of his father, to forward them to me in town, in order that I may return them to you.

“I heartily wish you success in your proposed work, and shall greatly rejoice to see placed before the public the many transactions in which my late illustrious relative bore so distinguished a part.

“The situation in which I am placed, as a trustee, and successor to one of his titles, will

not admit of my taking any other course than the one expressly directed by him in regard to the history of his life, as long as any hope remains that such a course will be ultimately pursued.

“ If you should wish to see me upon any point, at any time, on the subject of your proposed work, I shall be most happy to wait upon you, or to receive you here; and any thing I can do, which is not inconsistent with the line of my duty, I shall gladly perform.

“ I am, dear sir,

“ Sincerely yours,

(Signed)

“ ST. VINCENT.”

This letter appears to offer a most complete vindication of my brother's conduct, as far as relates to his writing the life of Earl St. Vincent. He always evinced the greatest anxiety that it should be written in conformity to the wishes of the noble earl himself; nor do we despair of such yet being the case; but it is scarcely to be expected that Lord Brougham can devote his valuable time to such labours as naval biography must require, particularly when the object is to transmit to posterity the great

achievements and splendid qualities of one who rose by his own merit to the summit of his profession, and whose example may have so powerful an influence in forming the characters of our future naval commanders.

Lord Brougham has recently given a brilliant and masterly sketch of the character of the noble earl; and few will question the accuracy of the following observations:

“The present sketches would be imperfect, if Lord St. Vincent were passed over in silence; for he was almost as distinguished among the statesmen as among the warriors of the age.

“This great captain, indeed, presented a union as rare as it was admirable, of the highest qualities which can adorn both civil and military life.”

Here the great outline is given with striking effect; but when is this to be filled up by the introduction of the actions and events by which this greatness was obtained? The want of diligent and careful research is evident from what has already appeared. Some features are swelled beyond their due proportion, and others so slightly passed over as to deprive them of their value. Thus, in speaking of the action in

which Captain Jervis took the *Pegaze*, Lord Brougham says, "An action which he soon after fought with the *Foudroyant* line-of-battle ship was the most extraordinary display of both valour and skill witnessed in that war so fertile in great exploits, and it at once raised his renown to the highest pitch."* This eulogium far exceeds the merits of the action, and will not be responded to either by the profession or the country. The noble earl himself would have been the first to reject it. Our naval history is full of instances of contests between ships of equal force, (even where there was none of the constructive assistance of the fleet of one of the combatants rapidly approaching, as was the case in this instance,) in which the British arms have been crowned with victory. Not that the action was void of great merit; for every action is meritorious where duty is faithfully performed; and in this instance it was most properly rewarded; but it must not be recorded as one on which the pinnacle of the Earl St. Vincent's fame rests, which it assumes to be here. His lordship is again in error when he says, "The peace then came; and it was followed by a war, the only

* Lord Brougham's Second Series of Historical Sketches, p. 157.

one in which the fleets of England reaped no laurels, until, just before its close, the bravery and seamanship of Rodney retrieved our naval honour.”* Now, the war in which the *Pegaze* was taken by the *Foudroyant*, and that in which Count de Grasse was defeated by Rodney, was one and the same: the latter victory was gained by Rodney on the 12th of April, 1782, and the capture of the *Pegaze* took place on the 20th day of the same month and year!

Again, in Lord Brougham’s sketch, it is stated: “For near twenty years Sir John Jervis was thus unemployed; and, in part, this neglect must certainly be ascribed to the side in politics which he took—being a Whig, of Lord Shelburne’s school.” The fact is, that at the conclusion of the war, in the latter end of 1782, Captain Jervis paid off the *Foudroyant*, and in 1790 he hoisted his flag in the *Prince*, and cruized in the Channel Fleet, under Lord Howe, during the Spanish armament. Here is only a lapse of seven years. In 1793, Sir John Jervis was appointed to the command in the West Indies, where he arrived early in January, 1794, (his command in the *Mediterra-*

* Historical Sketches by Lord Brougham, Second Series, p. 157.

nean did not take place till 1796.) What, then, becomes of the “long and eventful period on shore for near twenty years, and unemployed in any branch of the public service?”

These anachronisms may not be very important in the description of character, where there are so many other circumstances on which it is founded, and it is with great deference and respect that we venture to point them out; but correctness as to dates and successions of events is indispensable in biography, from which the materials of history are so often extracted. What, then, would have been the effect, should this have been the only account of Lord St. Vincent published? We must claim for Captain Brenton, at all events, the credit of having at least endeavoured to be the faithful narrator of the life of the noble earl; and having, at the same time, collected materials for more able pens to place him in his proper position in the annals of his country. But in reference to Lord Brougham’s work, these errors are well atoned for by the splendid and most striking illustrations of the characters of our two great naval heroes, which are so happily combined, and so feelingly described in the subsequent pages of

these sketches—so just, so accurately descriptive, and accompanied by such awakening, and, we may add, such affecting reflections. We can only regret that the history of both these men could not have been entirely written by his lordship; but we freely admit, that the labour of research and reference would have rendered this nearly impossible.

In page 445, Captain Brenton is attacked by his reviewer with great severity, and some coarseness, for the sentiments he offers upon the subject of impressment. It has been shewn, that deplorable as the system appeared to be in his view, he always admitted its absolute necessity, and only lamented that no steps had been taken in the long interval of twenty-two years, since the peace, to find some substitute for the measure. The absolute necessity of this is daily becoming more obvious. To prove this to be the case, we would refer to that able and excellent pamphlet, published some years since by an esteemed brother officer, Captain (now Rear-Admiral) Griffiths, which must convince every reader that such a resource for manning the navy cannot be available for any length of time, and that it is of vital importance to the

best interests of the country that some more effectual mode should be adopted. If it be true that Great Britain derives her consequence as a first-rate power from her naval superiority, and her extensive colonies, then it becomes indispensable that these should not be dependant for support upon a precarious supply of seamen. The peace-establishment for our ships of war should be kept up on such a footing as to admit of their being completed for war by means of sources which may be relied upon.

This subject is one of intense interest, and to none more so than to those who have passed their days in the navy; and it does appear that an officer might be permitted to express his anxiety upon such a question, without being subjected to such terms of abuse as are lavished upon Captain Brenton in this passage. We believe that he has gone far in pointing out the means of decreasing the necessity for impressment gradually, and of entirely abolishing it in future, by his suggestions for bringing up seamen, at the public expense, in such numbers as to relieve the suffering part of the community from the distress in which they are involved, and that the relief thus afforded would be, in a

great measure, provided for by the diminution of prison expenses, penal colonies, and poor's rate. At all events, should his views be erroneous, and his calculations defective, common courtesy would dictate that he might have credit for his good intentions.

That crimes will be committed, convictions take place, and the maintenance of convicts provided for, there can be no doubt; but if by a great national effort the number of criminals may be diminished, and the immense sums now expended in the restraint and punishment of offenders against the laws of the country, could be transferred to the increase and support of its defenders, few will hesitate in admitting that the experiment, at least, should be made, or in denying that there is any mawkish sentimentality in the suggestion.

So far from implying the slightest degree of censure or disrespect to Sir James Graham, we know that Captain Brenton considered him as one of the most active and judicious men who had ever filled the high and most important office of First Lord of the Admiralty. He admitted the excellence of Sir James Graham's bill, as far as it went, and only lamented that it could not have been carried farther.

CONCLUSION.

HAVING now gone through the various subjects on which I have been induced to offer my remarks upon the character and conduct of my brother, and in my endeavours to vindicate his memory from the charges which had been brought against him, which I have sought to do in perfect charity with every one, it only remains for me to give an account of the unexpected termination of his valuable life—for valuable it must be allowed to have been even by those who differed with him in sentiments and views, and to submit the whole statement to the deliberate judgment and sentence of his brother-officers and of his country.

Various cruel reports were circulated at the period of his death, as to the immediate cause of it, highly injurious to his memory: these, we

trust, have been effectually contradicted by the verdict of the coroner's inquest; but we have it in our power to give a particular detail, by which the cheerful and sane state of his mind to the very last is fully confirmed.

On the 5th of April 1839, the day preceding his death, he began his last letter to me; but as the postscript was written on the following morning, it is to be considered as written on the very day he died.

He was deeply interested in the progress of an Institution then in its infancy, of which he had been doing the duty of honorary secretary—the Society for the relief of the shipwrecked Mariners and Fishermen. It was proposed to have a dinner for the promotion of its Funds at the London Tavern, and Sir Robert Peel had kindly consented to take the chair. Captain Brenton was a member of a Committee of management for making the necessary arrangements. The following are extracts from the letter:—

“My peregrinations to the London Tavern to-day were deeply interesting, in spite of the snow, rain, and sleet. I was there from 11 to 2, and well employed all the time. The circular

on the other side is for the West End of the town, (the other is in the hands of the merchants.*) I hope we shall have one hundred stewards, at least; the whole expense to each of these functionaries will be £1. I put down your name and my own, *cum multis aliis, pour encourager les autres*, and I think it will have good effect. You may have double allowance of dinner, if you like. We think, in the city, the room will be a bumper. Sir Robert is decidedly popular there. But if you don't like to be a steward, you need not, though I think you ought to be; but never mind that. I have got a short and sweet letter to night from a Mr. Abbiss, desiring my acceptance of a fifty pound Bank of England note for the shipwrecked fishermen and mariners. He gives no other date but the 5th of April, and it came by post. There is no such name in the Red Book, and I must thank him in the public papers. I am on the dinner committee. We sit at the London Tavern every day, as I told you, from 11 to 4, Sundays excepted. One or the other of us is to be there. We are going on

* He had taken upon himself the task of canvassing at the West End, and his letter was written upon the fly sheet of a circular printed for the purpose.

very well; nothing can be better. You will see my advertisement in the morning papers to-morrow; and if you are fond of hearing me abused, read *The Times* of to-day. But you must keep one ear for my story. The boy Trubshaw has, I believe, done us great good by his overcharged malignity. I feel no sort of uneasiness about it, and only laugh at it.

“I am, as you may suppose, very busy; but your orders shall be attended to as far as I am able. I have not any papers by me, but I will tell Richards to send you some to-morrow. Mr. C. says you must put brown paper upon your rheumatical, sciatical limbs. Adieu for to-night—I am very tired—up at a quarter past six. I am a poor man with a large family, but certainly not out of work.* What a nice day this has been!

“ ‘ In frost and snow his fingers he’ll blow,
And wish the cold weather away.’

(An old school song.)

“I begin to think now I shall see my head on the Italian boys’ boards, either as the kidnapping captain, or the philoprogenitive.” (His bust had

* Alluding to the Children’s Friend Institution.

been just finished by Mr. Beynes, to which he thus playfully alluded.) He concludes,

“Adieu, affectionately yours,

“EDWARD.”

On the following morning he adds this post-script: “I send this off before eight; if any thing should come after breakfast, I will write again.”

He went at eleven o'clock to the London Tavern, and remained there till four; returned home by five, and sat down to dinner with Mrs. Brenton half an hour after. She describes him to have been remarkably cheerful during the evening, and having his tea at the usual hour. But at half-past eight he complained of being unwell; he retired to bed immediately, and his medical adviser was sent for, who came directly, but only in time to see him breathe his last, which he did before nine o'clock.

In the diary for the last day of the preceding year there is a passage which makes it evident that my lamented brother was not without some anticipations of a sudden call, and accordingly prepared for it. He says:

“Thus ends this year. And now let me return my most humble and hearty thanks to the

Great Giver of all good things for his infinite mercy to me and mine through the eventful course of it. May his divine grace remain in our souls, and render us grateful to Him whose indulgent care demands all our praises and thanksgivings. May we ever bear in mind, that our summons from hence to eternity may arrive at a moment when we do not expect it. Let us, then, be prepared; and may the same Almighty arm support us in our last moments, as it has done from the beginning; and this I beg for Jesus Christ's sake, our Great Redeemer and Advocate. Amen."

We believe this sincere and fervent prayer to have been most graciously heard and answered, and that the pious and faithful suppliant was permitted to exercise and enjoy his means of usefulness, and exemption from any great degree of suffering to the last hour of his life.

We have been particular in giving extracts from his letters and memoranda, which under other circumstances would appear trifling and irrelevant; but as they indicate a mind at ease, and at peace, they will enable the reader to appreciate the reports in the newspapers according to their just value, and to come to the

conclusion, that the faithful servant of God, having done his work here, was called away to enter into the joy of his Lord.

ERRATA.

Page 139, line 10, for *their* read *those*.

— 152, line 4 from bottom, for *these* read *those*.

— 251, line 5 from bottom, for *River* read *Riou*.

— 282, line 8, for *these* read *their*.

— 298, lines 5, 6, from bottom, for *the then* read *these*.



